Encounter

March 1975 35p

Middle-Class Socialists
Mark Abrams

A L Rowse
Byron's Friend

Philip Larkin on Wilfred Owen

Cyril Connolly on Auden

Two Stories:
Peter Bichsel

Jörg Steiner

Theatre
John Weightman

Writers
Gillian Tindall

Cold War
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'Ultra' secrets
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Encounter

MARCH 1975

VOL. XLIV NO. 3

Edited by MELVIN J. LASKY *and* ANTHONY THWAITE
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Published monthly by Encounter Ltd. (in association with the Open Court Publishing Co.).
Per copy: UK 35p: USA & Canada $1.25: Back numbers 50p ($1.50).
Annual subscription: UK £4: USA & Canada $14 (by air $15.50): Elsewhere £4.95.
Address for all Departments: Encounter Ltd., 59 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS (01-836 4194).
N. American Subscription Office: 1545 Argyle Road, LaSalle, Illinois 61301.
US news-stand distribution by Gordon & Gotch (USA) Inc. P.O. Box 1425, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.
Authorised as Second-class mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash.
Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. ©*1975 by Encounter Ltd.*
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Peter Bichsel

Grammar of a Departure

THE TRAIN leaves at 16.03. The first stage of the journey depends on how far her room is from the station, perhaps also on how far the ticket counter is from the platform and on whether she passes the counter on her way to the platform or whether she passes the platform first, then goes to the ticket counter to buy her ticket and then has to go back to the platform. Anyway, it's possible to describe the process in a complicated way. Then one would have to mention how many times she has looked at her watch since 2 p.m., and that the frequency of the looking increased. An observer could go on to state that the frequency increases regularly, that is, in a curve, and a complicated description could go so far into the details as to relate how at 14.07 she raises her left foot, a procedure she isn't conscious of herself, then places her left foot in front of the right, repeats the same action with her right foot, placing it in front of the left. If she herself became conscious of the procedure she would describe it as walking, as walking-up-to-the-wardrobe, for instance, to take a jacket out—and with more opportunity here for circumstantial details: turning the key, opening the door, right hand, left hand, sliding the jacket off its hanger, wardrobe door—if she becomes conscious of raising her feet she describes it as walking, but here the raising of feet—she has returned to her suitcase—isn't really a detail of walking but of packing a suitcase. Questioned about her activity, she won't speak of walking but of packing. "I'm packing my suitcase", she will say. What's questionable is whether she would say this to herself or only when she has the opportunity of telling it to someone else. In any case she was alone and didn't have the opportunity, so she would have needed other reasons for saying to herself, "I'm packing my suitcase." Whether or not she does that depends on the weight of her journey, not how hard the journey will be but how hard it is for her to begin the journey. And the journey can be so hard that she doesn't only say the "I'm packing my suitcase" to herself in her head but aloud. And she says, or will say or will have said—for even the time and sequence of this procedure aren't clear, and the procedure of travelling, of packing, of setting out is always in the past, for instance a past that creates the illusion of a future—she will say, had said: "I'm packing my suitcase, I'm going to pack my suitcase." In that way she, who had a past on her shoulders, created the illusion of a future, by pretending to have a present, enough of a present to pack suitcases. So as to make this act, which is really the past, a bad past, and really the future, a bad future—was and is and will be and will have been—so as at last to make something about this act that knows no present become a present, she said in the mode of the grammatical present, "I'm packing my suitcase."

WHAT TO ME WAS ONLY an assumption is

PETER BICHSEL *was born in 1935 in Lucerne. He has published a novel and two collections of short prose pieces, and has been awarded the literary prizes of Hamburg and "Gruppe 47." A volume of his "Stories for Children" was published in 1971 by Calder & Boyars (London) and Delacorte Press (New York).*

JÖRG STEINER *was born in 1930 and lives in Biel, Switzerland. He has published two novels, a book of poems, and several collections of short stories, radio plays, and film scenarios.*

MICHAEL HAMBURGER, *English poet and literary critic, translated both stories from the German.*

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becoming a certainty: she can't have said anything different, and she must have said it aloud and clearly, and perhaps more than once: "I'm packing my suitcase, I'm packing my suitcase." And what she said was—and she knew it—a gesture that did allow a present to form but didn't correspond to the truth. For language, literary usage, calls for the formula "suitcase" in response to the formula "travelling", travellers have suitcases, hikers have rucksacks, shoppers have bags. And what she was packing here was little more than a satchel, something like a valise in shape, true, but too small for that, for suitcases are needed only for journeys whose duration can be foreseen, beginning on September 11th, for instance, and ending, say, around the 20th, suitcases are only for journeys that have to do with the question, "When are you coming back?" No suitcase without a coming back, and journeys with no coming back are timeless, don't take place in the future, far less in the present. And yet departure is a simple procedure, and there's no need for me to describe it. Departure is a procedure you can watch in a railway station, and at the ticket counter there is a queue, and in that queue one moves forward, and there are people who don't seem up to buying a ticket that goes in a straight line, they ask for a ticket to here—wherever it may be, this here—then back to here, and they make sure of the future.

As for her, she has a room here, lives here, they tell him—wherever that here may be—and at 16.03 she travels back, back into a past, and she hopes to come back from that coming back. She lives past those times, and grammar can't put any order into her life. Whether her suitcase—let's call her satchel that—is packed, has been packed or is being packed, makes no difference, yields no time, and meanwhile I've grown quite certain, quite convinced that it can't have been any different, that after 2 p.m. she must have said to herself aloud and clearly, "I'm packing my suitcase."

IN ANY CASE THERE ARE NO REASONS for describing departures, even if it's a special, quite particular departure, for instance—and in this case—a departure on September 11th of the year 1971 at 16.03. Most people—everyone has seen that for himself, and I don't need to describe it—most people begin by raising their right foot on to the lowest carriage step and draw the left foot after it, placing it on the second-lowest step, and unless they are elderly or disabled, they place the second foot beside the first like children and repeat the process. But though this movement too has its function within the procedure of travelling and departure it has nothing to do with travelling, for who knows that he's raising his left foot when he does raise it, and besides one doesn't call that foot-raising, one calls it getting on to a train.

But she raises her right foot, and she does that so skilfully, so self-evidently, so easily that nobody noticed: this was no getting on to a train, this was the raising of a foot, the raising of one foot, the drawing after of it of another, a holding on to the rail with the left hand, the elbow at a slight angle, an easy and inconspicuous exertion of strength; she imitated and played at getting on to a train, so skilfully and almost self-evidently that anyone seeing it would have regarded it as a getting on to a train, as a real, ordinary and unselfconscious getting on to a train. What, for her, fell to pieces, was coherent for us.

What, for her, falls to pieces is coherent for us.

What, for her, will fall to pieces, in one, two, or three days, will always be coherent for me.

The coherence of looking at her watch, the coherence of packing a suitcase, the coherence of walking to the station, of getting on to the train, the coherence of travelling, and the procedure of travelling are describable, true, but not worth describing.

Only, I have reasons for describing this departure, for I carried her bag to the station, that is—now and in retrospect—I realise that I didn't do so but should have done, I simply forgot to do it, or the bag, the satchel, the suitcase was too small for me to think of doing it. So I didn't carry the bag, but I walked to the station beside her, and the story is by no means important enough to be worth telling, and I'm writing it for myself, have written it for myself.

For at a departure everything is retraceable: time-table, ticket counter, platform, destination.

But there are reasons for me to tell that one raises the left foot and places it in front of the

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right, for this was among the few things I could retrace as I walked beside her. And there are reasons why now, a few days later, I want to retrace more than that.

IT'S LIKELY THAT she arrived, was met by a nurse in a white uniform, perhaps with an embrace, certainly with a cheerful laugh, possibly with the sentence, "So she's arrived, our dear girl!", possibly with the sentence, "Our ray of sunshine!", for she is cheerful. And it's likely that then the door shut behind her, that she stood in half-light and looked around and recognised everything, for she'd been here before, and she is here again, and she will come back here, back to her coming back that isn't here, where she lives. Here, where she lives, in her room, she packs her bag, a toothbrush, a tube of toothpaste, a cake of soap, a jar of skin cream. The clinic doesn't allow nightgowns of one's own, and where one doesn't wake up it doesn't matter what one is wearing, and the nurse will say, "I suppose you're tired after your journey, it's best if we go to sleep at once, but we look very well, we've put on a bit of weight, if I'm not mistaken."

For a while she'll resist that "we", she will smile, will go to bed, will be afraid of falling asleep, because she'll be afraid of waking up, because she's afraid of not waking up. Perhaps she will have arrived one day too soon, perhaps two days.

She hasn't arrived more than two days too soon.

And then she won't wake up but will open her eyes, won't get up but raise her leg, and then all will be grammar: I you he she it we you they, behavebeen, am was, have been, shall have been, should have been, and a departure isn't worth describing and I describe it only because I can't retrace what happens when she packs her suitcase to travel to the clinic by train, to wait there for her next shift.

Jörg Steiner

Lorca

THEY'RE RETURNING to the village from the movie set, knowing a bit of English too: yes, yes, no—enough to play their extras' parts in a bad Western; Gipsies from around Almeria, disguised as Mexicans.

A Gipsy with a good growth of beard gets a bonus of 1000 pesetas a month. One Saturday afternoon, after the fifth or sixth Tio Pepe, he begins to sing, the civil war song, *los quatro generales*. A stranger at the next table has got up, and leaves the bar without looking at anyone. The singer is startled. He should have sung the permitted verses to the permitted tune. *Los quatro muleros*, a Republican song.

In the first post-War edition of Knaur's *Encyclopaedia* only the city of that name is mentioned, a city with a population of 70,000 at that time, a city with sulphur and lead mines: Lorca.

He drank water from an open well, the Republican Lorca, and he got ill—you can read about it in his letters: a Gipsy disease.

He worked on a poem when he got ill, and he felt himself getting ill while the poem came to nothing.

His tongue began to swell and grew numb while he sat over his poem. The ulcers in his mouth broke, the gums separated from his teeth, his lips went septic and began to bleed. A face turning into an animal's snout. A drop of blood falls on his paper, then another: brown, sticky blood. He can't eat any more, he sticks a straw in his mouth, into that lump of blood and scabs, where his lips used to be. He feeds on goat's milk, he has stretched out on a chair by the window. He's closed his eyes, he listens: sea and wind, the brushes of the women painting the house, the low voices of the visitors; but almost drowned by the louder noises his body makes: the throbbing of his blood, the swallowing of saliva.

Yes, Reubell, it's going to take time. It's an epidemic, a sort of foot-and-mouth disease. How did it happen? Did you drink water in a Jura village? Don't people know

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the dangers of open wells? Those scantily flowing brooks, those contaminated rain cisterns?

When the roads of the midlands and the lower Jura ranges have already been cleared of snow the road to the Chasseral remains impassable. Everyone knows that.

It will take time, Reubell, it's a very slow process; vitamins A and D, later, fruit stewed with plenty of sugar.

The visitors don't talk much, one's learnt to be a good listener. At times one feels like contradicting; a few minutes later one's forgotten what one wanted to say. Is that what's unbearable?

Isn't it more unbearable to be allowed to speak and know that one's words have no effect?

What? One ought to be grateful—grateful for a prohibition?

Are you speaking of a Republican song, Reubell? Of the song,

Without eating
that was your command
without speaking
for everything was banned

—sin hablar: pues todo estaba prohibido—

THE PAINTERS, two women from Nijar, have whitewashed the house. A house built of earth, a newly whitewashed tomb in which Lorca lies.

The women have dipped their brushes into the whitewash, the earthen wall absorbs the moisture as they work, a thin layer of lime, already dry as dust, fills the cracks and holes.

The slapping, the shuffling, the swishing and scratching of rags and brushes: the walled-in scorpions: the stillness. A tomb, the house a dazzling white tomb.

A flutter of wings, a rustling, a yelling, that makes them take off, thoughts, and muck stays behind.

Guano, Reubell, birdshit, rich in nitrogen and phosphorus; guano is a Spanish word.—You see the boat with its freight, the sailors with American gasmasks, the captain, giving orders from his oxygen cell. A boat with a cargo of birdshit. You see the soapy timber and work-gangs of caretaking foresters marching in step: men with puttees, carrying axes, a pointer dog on its leash: in Knaur's *Encyclopaedia* you'll find it somewhere not far from previous convictions and prostate gland.

A flutter of wings, a rustling.

Look at them, the healthy people, when they open their mouths: to yawn, to eat, to speak, to laugh.

That makes them take off, thoughts.

Men with life sentences load the boat on shores of the Pacific. The appropriate government officials carry their despairing letters behind the house with tongs and burn them unread.

On islands in the Pacific rocks disintegrate under the snow-white birdshit. Guano boats dock in deserted harbours not far from human settlements.

There, in the inhabited cities, generations of house-owners in asbestos gloves work with grim determination at their winterproof barbecue grills.

Over the heads of eager stamp collectors the unbearable stench forms a cloud they do not want to notice under their cloche of body spray, exhaust fumes and smoke. Guano, a blinding commodity, one that gives its name a sinister power: guano.

And muck stays behind.

In August the windows of the ward are still shut. The people entering the house whisper; visitors, peasants who bring prickly pears and accept a glass of wine, look about warily and leave as quietly as they arrived; a German doctor who doesn't dare touch his patient; a Spanish doctor who has taken his family with him on his hospital round.

The house is full of an incessant murmur, of the flutter of wings, of rustling, yelling.

The Republican feels his strength drain out of him.

He begins to be afraid of his despondency.

He recognises the forces that are oppressing his country. He is at their mercy.

He doesn't finish his poem, the worksheet will be lost.

The worksheet has been lost.

It's the day when he feels cold for the first time.

His temperature will drop, the swelling will go down, his lips will be covered with a black crust, and when the crust breaks off they will be too large for his emaciated face.

Afternoon, five o'clock, evening; he feels cold.

It will take time, Reubell.

A gipsy disease, a traveller's disease, a nomad's disease.

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Mark Abrams

The British Middle-Class Socialist

"Class is the basis of British party politics; all else is embellishment and detail."
Peter Pulzer, POLITICAL REPRESENTATION (1967)

"Very little except class matters for politics in Great Britain . . . we have discovered little evidence of a decline of the association of class and party."
Robert Alford, PARTY AND SOCIETY (1963)

THERE IS GENERAL AGREEMENT among domestic and foreign students of British politics that the conclusions of Pulzer and Alford are an adequate summary of voting behaviour and party loyalties in this country. The working class (*i.e.* manual workers, and their wives and adult children) vote Labour. The middle class (*i.e.* the remaining one-third of the electorate) support the Conservatives.

On this basis one would expect that Labour would easily win every General Election. In fact, over the almost thirty years since 1945 Labour has held a Parliamentary majority for only twelve years. To explain this apparent refutation of the "Class-Party" account of British party politics analysts have concentrated on the "deviant" manual worker—*the working-class Tory*. They have, for the most part, neglected the existence and importance of one other type of class defector—*the middle-class Socialist*. This neglect is surprising since it is clear from all surveys of voting behaviour that the Labour Party cannot win a General Election simply on the strength of its working-class support. For national victory it must be sure of the votes of at least 25% of all middle-class electors. Without them it could never be more than a permanent Opposition.

From a survey carried out at the end of 1973 and the beginning of 1974 it is possible to say something about who these people are—what their values are—and how they differ not only from middle-class Tories but also from working-class Labour supporters.

The data comes from a probability sample of 1,000 men and women electors drawn from the Electoral Registers for the whole of *urban* Britain. On the basis of their occupation a little over one-third of the sample (37%) were middle class. Of these, in reply to the question: "*Which political party do you usually support at General Elections?*", 26% described themselves as *Labour*, and 45% as *Conservatives*; the rest of the middle class were Liberals, persistent non-voters, or inconsistent in their party loyalties. Of the working-class respondents, 54% usually support Labour at General Elections; 21% are Conservatives; and 25% are Liberals, abstainers, etc.

Middle-Class Socialists & Working-Class Socialists

THE AVERAGE working-class Labour supporter is almost ten years older than his average middle-class political comrade. In common with the rest of the working class he has had considerably less contact with higher education. Only 3% have had any full-time schooling to the age of 18 or more; the comparable ratio among middle-class Socialists is 25%. However, his family income is only 25% lower—thanks largely to the high earnings of skilled manual workers. He is *more* inclined to describe his religious ties as either Church of England or Roman Catholic. (Indeed, one of the striking features of the urban working-class Labour vote is that nearly one-fifth comes from Roman Catholics!) He is *more* likely than the middle-class Socialist to own a washing machine; but on every other durable consumer commodity (car, telephone, central heating, etc.) his rate of ownership lags far behind. And, whereas one-third of all middle-class Socialists who take a holiday "go

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abroad", among working-class Socialists only 7% take their holidays outside Britain.

The contrast in their self-identified[1] occupations is even greater. Nearly three-quarters of the working-class Socialists said they belonged to just three groups—skilled manual workers (32%), unskilled labourers (23%), and old-age pensioners (18%); on the four most common middle-class Socialist identifications—Civil servants (20%), Office workers (18%), Professionals (14%), and Teachers (12%), they made practically no showing at all. Only 8% of all working-class Socialists claimed to belong to any of these four occupations which between them accounted for two-thirds of all middle-class Socialists.

THERE IS A SUBSTANTIAL DIFFERENCE between the two Socialist groups in their experience of social mobility. Whereas 95% of all working-class Socialists are the children of working-class parents, nothing like the same social stability is to be found among middle-class Socialists. Over 60% have acquired their present middle-class status after having been born and brought up in working-class homes. In spite of their many present differences the two groups of Labour supporters have a strong link in their past working-class parentage.

Their newspaper reading habits are, again, dissimilar. Among working-class Socialists, of all those who regularly read a morning newspaper, nearly three-quarters take tabloid dailies, either the *Daily Mirror* or the *Sun*. Only 1% read one or other of the three "class" papers—*The Guardian*, *The Times*, and *Daily Telegraph*. Quite a few middle-class Socialists also turn to the two tabloids (roughly one-third of them), but just as many are regular readers of the three "class" papers with *The Guardian* in first place, slightly ahead of the *Daily Telegraph* and well ahead of *The Times*.

On Sundays there are similar differences. Among working-class Socialists the most favoured newspapers are the *News of the World* (38%), *The People* (33%) and the *Sunday Mirror* (31%). A handful of deviants read the *Sunday Times* (4%) and *The Observer* (2%). In contrast these last two are the most widely-read papers among middle-class Socialists (23% and 21% respectively), though neither of them is very far ahead of the *News of the World* and *The People*.

Table 1: Some characteristics of the three groups

	Middle-class Labour	Middle-class Tory	Working-class Labour
	%	%	%
Age:			
18–29	33	17	23
30–44	27	25	24
45 *and over*	40	58	53
	100	100	100
Sex:			
Male	46	50	46
Female	54	50	54
Terminal Education Age:			
15 or less	49	42	87
16, 17	26	40	10
18 *and over*	25	18	3
Weekly Household Income:			
Under £25	13	13	31
£25–£44	36	29	42
£45—£79	38	37	22
£80 *and over*	13	21	5
Religion:			
Church of England	54	68	62
Noncomformist	13	10	12
Roman Catholic	9	6	18
Jewish	5	1	—
Atheists, etc.	19	15	8
Parents' Social Class:			
Middle class	14	26	1
Lower middle class	25	23	4
Working class	61	51	95
Possess:			
Central heating	53	66	30
Colour television	38	40	28
Telephone	68	82	27
Car	69	79	40

THE TWO GROUPS OF SOCIALISTS come together again when they were asked their views on the present state of democratic institutions in Britain, and what they thought ought to prevail. Each respondent was asked to consider six aspects of the democratic process and then to use an *0*-to-*10* scale to indicate how much of each he thought there *is* "in Britain today", and how much he thought there *ought to be*. On the scale, "*10*" represented "*a very great deal*" and "*0*" signified "*not at all.*" The six aspects presented to him were:—

1. How much *freedom of speech* is there in Britain today?

[1] In addition to being asked for a detailed description of his occupation, each respondent was shown a list of 15 broad socio-occupational groups (*e.g.*, skilled workers, clerks and similar office-workers) and asked "*Which one of these groups would you say you belong to,* or *come closest to?*"

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2. How much *tolerance* is there by the general public towards people who want to live differently from the way most people do?
3. How *democratic* is Britain?
4. How easy is it for people like yourself to *understand what's going on* in politics and government today?
5. How much *influence* do *voters* have on the way the country is governed?
6. How much *social equality* is there in Britain today?

Both groups of Labour supporters took a poor view of the present state of British democracy. Only once did a rating exceed 7, and that was when middle-class Socialists put a score to the amount of freedom of speech in Britain. Otherwise both groups usually gave ratings round the 5 level. Both took a particularly gloomy view of the amount of influence exercised by voters on the way the country is run, and working-class Socialists averaged no more than a 4·7 score when asked how easy it is for people like themselves to understand contemporary politics. The two groups were also in agreement in their low ratings on the degree of social equality in Britain.

Labour Supporters' ratings of "Amount of Democracy" (0 to 10 scale)

	Middle-class	Working-class
Amount of:		
Freedom of speech	7·6	6·9
Democracy in general	6·4	6·8
Ability to understand politics	5·9	4·7
Tolerance	5·5	5·9
Social equality	5·2	5·4
Voters' influence	4·8	4·6

When respondents were asked to use the scale to indicate how much there "ought to be" of each aspect, both Socialist groups indicated for each of them an average figure of either 9 or slightly under 9. Within a very narrow range of differences middle-class Labour supporters gave their highest average scores to "ability to understand political issues" (9·1) and "social equality" (9·0). Their working-class political allies, however, gave their highest ratings to free speech" (9·0) and "voters' influence" (8·9) and "ability to understand politics" (also 8·9). Greater "social equality" came fourth (8·8).

These are, of course, negligible differences, and suggest that for all practical purposes Labour supporters from both social classes hold identical views about the character of a perfect political system. Of all six aspects put to them only *tolerance* receives a score significantly below the 9·0 points level, and even here but for the relatively lukewarm endorsement by working-class Labour supporters (8·3) the average gap would be slight.

The strong views held by Labour supporters about the desirability of greater social equality are presumably related in part to their perceptions of the present very unequal distribution of incomes. Each respondent was asked to use the 0-to-10 scale to indicate what he thought most nearly represented the standard of living of people in 15 different socio-occupational classes—with 10 indicating the highest standard of living and 0 meaning the lowest standard. They then applied the same scale to their own standard of living.

Both groups of Labour supporters see a situation where some people (business executives, doctors and lawyers, and those who live on investment dividends) enjoy extremely high standards of living—round the 9 mark. Others (old-age pensioners, those who live on social-security benefits, unskilled labourers) are down at the 3-to-5 end of the scale.

There are here small, but not unimportant, differences between middle-class and working-class Socialists. The former give their own standard of living a rating of 6·7 and perceive this as exceeded by only five of the 15 occupations—business executives, professionals, investors, civil servants, and skilled manual workers. Working-class Socialists give themselves a rating of 6·3, and then see this surpassed by at least 9 of the 15 groups—the above 5, plus small shopkeepers, teachers, policemen, and office workers. And working-class Socialists, in addition to giving themselves a relatively low rating, are more generous than are middle-class Socialists when assessing everyone else's standard of living.

From this pattern of perceived present economic inequality, respondents were then asked to use the scale to indicate what standard of living they thought each occupational group *deserved*. Both types of Labour supporters are agreed on the character and outcome of such an equitable rearrangement. Both report that:

1. The average standard of living should be raised by 20%
2. But two groups should suffer cuts—business executives and investors.
3. They themselves should receive an increase that at least matched the average all-round raise.
4. The gap between the highest and lowest standards of living should be reduced—but not eliminated.

The main difference between the two classes is in the relative increase they think should be given to particular groups. Working-class Socialists,

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as compared with their middle-class comrades, are more generous in the relative increases they want for unskilled and semi-skilled labourers, and appreciably less generous towards teachers, students, and coloured immigrants. And they set for themselves an average relative standard of living (*i.e.* as expressed on the *0-to-10* scale) just as high as the standard to which middle-class Socialists feel they are entitled. Both feel their deserved standard of living on this scale would be at slightly over the 8 out of 10 level. It is clear, however, that middle-class and working-class Socialists have *different* perceptions of present standards of living. The former with a "deserved" increase of 20% on his present standard of living would still have a standard of living 20% higher than the "deserved" standard of living to which the working-class Labour supporter feels he is entitled.

IN SHORT, WHEN IT COMES to "operationalising justice" in material terms, the working-class Socialist defines it as a situation where he has reached the present standard of living of the average middle-class Socialist. The latter defines it as one where he is at least as well off as the average middle-class Conservative. Both socialist types feel deprived, but have different reference groups in mind when it comes to assessing their deprivation.

THE PERCEPTIONS SHARED by both types of Socialists about the present unequal distribution of standards of living, and the lack of any close resemblance between *what is* and *what ought to be*, add interest to their replies to those questions in the survey which asked people

Table 2: Average Levels of Satisfaction in Various Life Areas
(0 to 10 scale)

	Middle-class		Working-class
	Labour	Tory	Labour
Life Area			
Job	8·0	8·4	8·5
Housing	7·6	8·4	7·4
Health	7·6	7·9	7·6
Standard of living	7·5	7·9	7·1
Town where living	7·5	7·7	8·0
Leisure	7·3	7·6	7·4
District where living	7·1	7·9	7·3
Financial position	6·6	7·2	6·4
Education received	6·6	7·1	6·5
Democratic Process	6·3	7·0	6·5
Life overall:			
Now	7·4	7·8	7·5
Entitlement	8·7	8·6	8·6

to assess the relative importance of various circumstances that currently play a part in determining the average person's standard of living. The first of these questions asked the respondent to consider three possible causes, and then to indicate which one of them he thought was most important. The three possibilities were: (1) *his own efforts*; (2) *the way our society is organised and run*; or (3) *luck*.

The patterns and emphases of responses from both groups were strikingly similar—and surprising. Both gave two-thirds of their votes to the "own-efforts" determinant. There were some differences in the allocation of the minority options. Middle-class Socialists discounted "luck" almost completely, and nearly one-third of all their choices identified "the way society is organised" as the most important determinant. Working-class Labour supporters were not so apt to underestimate "luck." One in ten regard it as more important than either "personal effort" or the effects of the social system in determining one's standard of living.

A SECOND QUESTION asked the respondents to make a similar choice between three other possible determinants: (1) The strength of the trade unions; (2) the management and efficiency of employers; and (3) government policy. This time the patterns of response differed appreciably. Working-class Labour supporters, as compared with middle-class supporters, gave many more votes to "trade union strength" (34% as against 20%) and many fewer to "government policy" (25% as against 40%). In short, in the eyes of the working-class Socialist industrial action rather than Whitehall legislation ensures higher living standards for the ordinary man—*i.e.* themselves. But for both groups of socialists at least 60% of all votes went to one or the other of these two factors. Neither group seems to attach any substantial importance to managerial efficiency.

THE TWO GROUPS OF LABOUR SUPPORTERS can also be compared in the light of the answers they gave to a question in which the respondent was asked to choose from four listed socio-political values the two which seemed "*most desirable*" to him. The four offered him were:

1. Maintain law and order in the nation.
2. Give the people more say in important political decisions.

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3. Achieve a higher standard of living for everyone.
4. Protect freedom of speech.

The hypothesis behind this question was that Conservatives of both classes would pick (1) and (3)—Order and Affluence (or peace and prosperity). Socialists of both classes would presumably choose (2) and (4)—Participation and Liberty.

The outcome, however, was very different. In both Socialist groups the biggest block of preferences went to the combination of Order and Affluence—just over 40%. A handful of middle-class Socialists (9%) opted for the expected combination of Freedom and Participation, and in the working class even fewer (3%) chose this pair. The rest picked other combinations; and the working class in particular put its support behind "more affluence" and "more participation" as the pairing that seemed to them most desirable.

MUCH OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE used in this survey was concerned with measuring people's levels of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with various aspects of their lives—job, leisure, education, housing, etc. Again they used the *0-to-10* scale (with *10* indicating "completely satisfied", and *0* "completely dissatisfied").

The average levels of satisfaction expressed by the two groups were very similar. Middle-class Socialists expressed most satisfaction with their job (8·0); their health (7·6); their housing (7·6); the town in which they lived (7·5); and their standard of living (7·5). Four of these were also among the top scores of working-class Socialists; the one exception was "standard of living" which dropped down (to 7·1), and its place among the working-class top five was taken by "leisure" (7·4).

Middle-class Socialists gave the lowest average levels of satisfaction to their leisure (7·3); the district in which they live (7·1); their financial position[2] (6·6); the education they had received (6·6); and the quality of British democracy (6·3). Apart from the one difference already noted, these were also the low scorers in the working-class ratings.

ON THESE FIGURES one might be inclined to conclude that our respondents' Left-wing political attitudes spring from a frustration primarily with the workings of British democracy and with the education they had received, and (to some extent) from their relatively unsatisfactory financial situation. This conclusion, however, is hardly supported by their answers when they were presented with a list of various life-areas that had been discussed, and were asked:

> "*Which three on the list are the most important for you personally in determining how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with your* **life as a whole** *these days?*"

Both groups of socialists indicated that they attached hardly any importance to either *education* or the *democratic process*. Both gave replies to the effect that very much more importance was attached to the state of their health and to their standard of living. The middle class Socialists added their "job" to this pair, while working-class Socialists added their "housing conditions."

THERE ARE, THEN, important differences in the backgrounds of these two groups of Labour supporters.

Those now in the middle class are much younger. They have had many more years of formal education. They have larger incomes. Their homes are better equipped with durable consumer goods; and they are much more likely to take their holidays either abroad or in their second homes in the country and by the sea. In religious beliefs they are more likely to describe themselves as Atheists and Jews, and are less likely to be Roman Catholics. Unlike their working-class comrades their jobs are mainly "clean", and their working hours are fewer. They have experienced much greater upward mobility within one generation. In their reading habits they prefer newspapers which communicate through words rather than pictures. And they see Government action, rather than trade-union action, as the more important determinant of the average citizen's material conditions.

But the two groups of Labour supporters have some things in common. Both consider that our democratic institutions are far from satisfactory. In particular, they feel that voters have too little influence over the way the country is governed, and that there is insufficient social equality. Both see business executives and investors enjoying very high standards of living, and feel these standards ought to be reduced. Both perceive

[2] *I.e.*, income plus assets minus debts and liabilities.

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considerable inequalities in standards of living and think that these ought to be reduced—but not entirely eliminated. Both hold that they deserve to be better off than they are. Both, when asked to choose between them, favour order and affluence rather than participation and free speech. Both admit that they are well satisfied with their jobs and their housing, and both consider that—after "*health*"—"*material well-being*" is the most important in determining their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their lives as a whole.

And, finally, at least 60% of today's middle-class Socialists have one other feature in common with working-class Labour supporters. They, too, come from working-class parents. They are far from being, in their political values, "class defectors" or rebels against parental norms. They are, rather, holding on—despite their changed status and life styles—to views acquired in childhood.

Middle-Class Socialists & Middle-Class Conservatives

COMPARED with their Tory middle-class neighbours, middle-class Labour supporters are younger—there is an average age difference of twelve years between them. They are more likely to have Sixth Form and university education—25% have received full-time education at least until after their eighteenth birthday (the comparable Tory figure is 18%). They have slightly lower family incomes—there is an average difference of £5 a week between them. Perhaps as a consequence of this income gap, the average middle-class Socialist household (although much better equipped than the average working-class family) is, when compared with the middle-class Tory, less likely to have a car, a telephone, a washing-machine and central heating. However, when it comes to ownership of colour television, second homes, and taking holidays abroad, they do not lag much behind their Conservative neighbours. They are less likely to describe their religious ties as Church of England and more likely to be Atheists, Roman Catholics, or Jews.

WHEN ASKED TO CHECK from a list of 15 occupations the one that came closest to describing their own job, both Socialists and Tories naturally concentrated on the middle-class occupations—doctors and lawyers, civil servants, teachers, company directors, owners of small firms, etc. But there were some striking differences between the two middle-class groups. For example, 32% of middle-class Tories described themselves as company directors, professional investors, or owners of small businesses. Among Labour supporters only 4% so described themselves. Or, again: 12% of Socialists were teachers as against a mere 1% among middle-class Tories. Broadly speaking, middle-class Socialists are mainly bureaucrats or are in the liberal professions. Middle-class Tories are much more closely associated with entrepreneurial activities.

There is also some, but hardly a substantial, difference between the two in terms of their parental backgrounds. Slightly over 60% of today's middle-class Socialists come from working-class homes. Among Tories the proportion with some social mobility experience is a little over half. This difference is not nearly as large as one might have expected. Both middle-class groups have recruited heavily from the "socially successful" children of working-class parents.

NEWSPAPER READING HABITS are strikingly dissimilar. On weekdays half of all Tory middle-class newspaper reading is concentrated on the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Express*. Their appetite for *The Times* and *The Guardian* is extremely slight—2% read each of these. On Sundays the range of their reading is even narrower. Of those who take a paper just over half turn to the *Sunday Express*; the *Sunday Times* in second place accounts for another quarter.

What is distinctive and striking about the daily newspaper reading of middle-class Labour supporters is that so many of them are regular

Table 3: Three Most Important Areas for Over-all Life-Satisfaction

	Middle-class Labour %	Middle-class Tory %	Working-class Labour %
Life Area			
Health	21	25	21
Standard of living	19	16	17
Job	16	15	12
Income	11	11	15
Leisure	10	6	5
Housing	10	14	19
District	5	6	6
Democracy	5	6	3
Education	3	1	2
	100	100	100

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readers of newspapers which do not support the Labour Party. Almost two-fifths read the *Daily Mirror* and *The Guardian*, but then their cumulative readership of the *Daily Express*, *Daily Telegraph*, and *Daily Mail* is almost as large. Much the same is true of their Sunday newspaper reading when substantial minorities of middle-class Socialists turn to the *Sunday Telegraph*, the *Sunday Express*, and to the *News of the World*.

WHEN RESPONDENTS WERE ASKED, first, to assess the quality of our existing democratic institutions, and then to indicate what their quality ought to be, significant differences emerged between the middle-class groups. Broadly, the Labour middle-class supporter has a relatively poor view of *prevailing* conditions and very high standards of what there *ought to be*. The middle-class Conservative is a little less critical of what we have and less demanding in his views of what is needed to bring about a more democratic society.

In their perceptions of the prevailing situation the two political groups, on average, gave similar patterns of answers. Both give fairly high ratings to the present degree of freedom of speech. Both award modest scores to British democracy, and to their own ability to understand current political issues. Both are in broad agreement that in Britain today the extent of toleration of minorities, of social equality, and of voter influence over government is low. Within the broad agreement between middle-class Socialists and middle-class Tories, the former consistently gave average scores that were very slightly lower; the average gap was less than 0·6 points behind the Tory ratings.

Again, in constructing their ideal democracy the two middle-class political groups often expressed almost identical views. On all six aspects, both gave ratings that were appreciably higher than what they felt is currently available. On all but one of them ("democracy in general") the Labour view of what should prevail was very slightly higher than the Tory rating. The only notable discrepancy related to "social equality." In turning from *what is* to *what ought to be* the average middle-class Socialist raised his score from 5·2 points to 9·0 points—a jump that greatly exceeded the average Tory increase from 6·0 points to 7·9 Indeed, in setting targets for an equitable society the middle-class Socialists placed social equality almost at the top of the list, while the Conservatives located this value lower than any other.

THE STRONG VIEWS held by middle-class Socialists about the desirability of "more social equality" are not altogether matched by their views on the desirability of greater economic equality. They perceive very substantial differences currently between the standards of living of the rich and the poor. But, when asked how various groups would fare *in a society where all received what what they deserved*, the most striking features of their responses were these:

1. To award *more* to almost everyone—the exceptions were business executives and those who live on investments. Both groups deserve much less than they currently have.
2. To claim a 20% increase for themselves.
3. To reduce—but certainly not to eliminate—the gap between themselves and the traditional underdogs of the economy (such as those who depend on social-security benefits, unskilled labourers, coloured immigrants, and shop assistants).
4. To give teachers (many middle-class socialists identified themselves as teachers) a 33% increase.
5. To award old-age pensioners increases that would more than double their present standard of living.

MIDDLE-CLASS TORIES have much the same perceptions of present inequalities: business executives, professional people, and investors enjoy the highest standards of living; old-age pensioners, shop assistants, unskilled labourers *et al.* come at the bottom. When asked to indicate what each of the several occupational groups *deserved*, they followed (up to a point) the pattern set by the middle-class Socialist. They, too, raised the average standard of living—but by only 13% as against the average Socialist increase of 23%. In particular, their picture of a society where incomes were based on "just deserts" is one where:

1. Everyone, except business executives and investors, is better off. The executives, however, suffer a mere 2% cut; but under a Tory middle-class dispensation of justice the person living

Table 4: How much ought there to be in the "democratic process"?
(0 to 10 scale)

	Middle-class Labour	Middle-class Tory	Working-class Labour
Ability to understand Politics	9·1	9·0	8·9
Social equality	9·0	7·9	8·8
Freedom of Speech	8·9	8·8	9·0
Voters' influence	8·8	8·5	8·9
Democracy in general	8·8	8·9	8·8
Tolerance	8·6	8·1	8·3

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on dividends from investments and shares will be only very slightly better off than if he received what middle-class Socialists hold to be his just deserts. Almost everyone else is better off, but the investor deserves to suffer at least a 10% reduction in his standard of living.

2. The respondent himself is only 16% better off; but even this relatively modest gain provides him with a standard of living surpassed only by professional people and business executives.
3. The traditional poor are all a little better off, but, with one exception, their gains are modest so that in the "just society" the gap in living standards between the respondent and the poor actually increases.
4. The exception is the old-age pensioner. If he were to get what *he* deserves, his standard of living would go up by over 70%.
5. Even coloured immigrants will be better off in a Tory Utopia. But the middle-class Tory award of a 15% increase for him is a long way short of the 42% improvement that the middle-class Socialist feels should be his entitlement.

THE FAMILY INCOME of the average middle-class Socialist, although less than that of the average middle-class Tory family, is still appreciably larger than that of the average British household—over one-third of the middle-class Socialists reported annual incomes of £3,000 or more. All the same, as we have seen, as a group they feel that they are entitled to at least a 20% increase in any redistribution where incomes are based on justice rather than market forces. They also feel that their "equitable" standards of living should be at a level exceeded by very few other people.

These views add interest to those questions in the survey which asked people to assess the relative importance of various circumstances that currently play a part in determining the average person's standard of living. When asked to rate the importance of "his own efforts", "the way our society is organised and run", or "luck", nearly 90% of middle-class Tories chose the first of these. But what is surprising is that *two-thirds* of all middle-class Socialists *also* decided that of the three options offered "personal effort" is the most important determinant, and only 30% thought that "the System" plays the dominant role in deciding what the average person gets in material goods. One possible (but untested) explanation of this acceptance by middle-class Socialists of traditional Conservative social philosophy is that most of these socialists have experienced upward social mobility. By "their own efforts" they have taken educational opportunities not available to the majority of people with working-class origins, and embarked on careers that were certainly not open to their parents.

WHEN ASKED TO MAKE a similar choice between "the strength of the trade unions", "the management and efficiency of employers", and "government policy", neither middle-class group attached much importance to the part played by trade unions in determining the standard of living of the average person. But when it came to the other two possible determinants a clear difference of opinion emerged. Two-thirds of middle-class Tories awarded the credit to the efficiency of employers. On imputed ideological grounds one *might* have expected from the middle-class Socialists an equally substantial majority to select "government policy" as the most important determinant. There was, however, no such majority. Their votes were divided equally between management efficiency and government policy.

FINALLY, IN COMPARING the two middle-class groups we have their answers to another "forced choice" question concerned with socio-political values. Among both middle-class groups the most widely preferred combination was control and order. In both groups negligible minorities chose participation and liberty. The middle-class Socialists, however, made at least a token nod to their ideological tenets when 1 in 6 of them linked "participation" with "affluence". It is possible, of course, that this minority favoured more participation because they saw it as a necessary means to more affluence.

Most Desirable Pairs

Combinations	Middle-class Socialists %	Middle-class Tories %
Order and Affluence	42	46
Participation and Affluence	16	9
Participation and Liberty	9	3
Other combinations	33	42
	100	100

In considering the differences and similarities between middle-class Socialists and middle-class Tories it is important to bear in mind one outstanding difference—the "typical socialist" is in his twenties and early thirties, while the "typical Tory" is slightly over fifty years of age. It is this age gap which largely explains many of the other differences between the two groups—for example,

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that the average middle-class Socialist has had more experience of higher education; is not so affluent; is less likely to describe himself as Church of England; and finds the contents of the *Daily Mirror* and the *Guardian* more congenial than those of the *Daily Mail* and *The Times*. The age gap may also explain, in part, the differences in occupations. The middle-class Socialist is more likely to be working in the post-War growth industries (teaching, and office work) and much less likely to be a company director or business executive.

Table 5: Two "Most Important" of Four Values

	Middle-class Labour %	Middle-class Tory %	Working-class Labour %
Combination			
Order and Affluence	42	46	43
Affluence and Participation	16	9	28
Participation and Free Speech	9	3	3
Other combinations	33	42	26
	100	100	100

The similarities between the two groups are more striking than the differences. This is particularly so in the data that have some bearing on *social values*.

Both take a poor view of the present state of British democracy. Both feel there ought to be appreciably higher standards—although here there is a real difference in the much greater stress that Socialists put on the need for greater social equality. In considering the present distribution of standards of living, both middle-class groups perceive the same inequalities with the same people at the top and the same people at the bottom of the ladder. They both feel that these inequalities should be *reduced* but not eliminated, and that they themselves should be *nearer* to the top end of the scale than they are now. In both groups solid majorities feel that in determining the average man's standard of living "personal effort" is more important than either *luck* or *the way society is organised*, and that "management efficiency" is more important than trade union strength. However, middle-class Tories rate management efficiency far ahead of government policy in determining the standard of living of the average person, while middle-class Socialists rate these two factors as being of equal importance.

When the two groups were asked to use the *0-to-10* scale to indicate their levels of satisfaction with various aspects of their lives, the two groups expressed almost identical rank orderings of the various aspects. That is to say, both gave the highest scores to their *jobs* and their *housing*, and both gave their lowest scores to the democratic process and to their own education. But along with this similarity of relative orderings of satisfaction, there is one important difference between the two groups. On every one of the ten aspects of their lives, middle-class Socialists expressed *less* satisfaction than did middle-class Tories. In other words, a diffused sense of relative dissatisfaction with what they now have would seem to be a distinctive mark of the middle-class Socialists. This sign of personal dissatisfaction is underlined by the fact that, when asked to indicate their over-all *present* level of satisfaction with their lives and the over-all level they thought they were *entitled* to, the average middle-class Socialist gave a present score of 7·4 and thought he was entitled to a level of satisfaction nearly 20% higher. The comparable gap for the average middle-class Tory was only 10%.

Since the two middle-class groups have much in common, and since many of their present differences are probably related to age differences, the question that inevitably arises is: What will be the political loyalties and voting behaviour of today's middle-class Socialists in 10 to 15 years' time, *i.e.* when they, too, are middle-aged?

One possibility is that there will be no change in their loyalties and votes, and that we are now witnessing the emergence of a new kind of "middle class"—one with middle-class status and working-class politics. But it is equally possible that as they age (and get larger incomes, altogether nearer to what they consider they are entitled to) they will move to the centre or the Right in their political sympathies and values. Certainly there is very little in their present life-styles and social values to stop at least half of them (over the years, and as their working-class origins fade) from resolving their present Class/Politics inconsistency—either by becoming "independents" or even by voting Tory.

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George Feaver

Wounded Knee

& the New Tribalism

The American Indians (II)

U.S. SOLDIERS fighting in the Central Highlands of Viet Nam were instructed during the summer of 1966 to name their field operations after famous Americans. The historic 7th Cavalry, riding helicopters rather than the Front Royal remounts that were their 19th-century mainstay, chose to call their largest and most difficult campaign "*Operation Crazy Horse.*"[1]

Ninety years had elapsed since the daring Sioux warrior they now chose to honour had played a leading part in the swift, humiliating destruction of five troops of the 7th Cavalry under General George Custer in the fabled Battle of the Little Big Horn.[2] It was an accomplishment for which he eventually paid with his life. Hunted down relentlessly by vengeful troopers in the aftermath of "Custer's Last Stand", Crazy Horse's Oglala Sioux followers were at the point of starvation when, in the early spring of 1877, the proud chief surrendered to the 7th's General George Crook—in exchange for a promise of land in the Powder River country. He was never to reach his promised land. Undiminished in spirit after his release from custody, Crazy Horse complained loudly about the demeaning reservation life that awaited his people. Army officials, alarmed that his utterances might precipitate a new round of hostilities, ordered his re-arrest and incarceration at Fort Robinson, Nebraska. He died there soon afterwards at the early age of 35, cut down by the bayonet thrust of a panicky young garrison guard as he made a desperate bid to escape.

The 7th Cavalry's belated Viet Nam tribute to its one-time antagonist thus seemed to bring full circle the terms of its tragic relationship with Crazy Horse, and indeed, with the American Indian in general. It was a relationship whose early character was succinctly summarised in the infamous remark of the 7th's General Philip Sheridan that "the only good Indians I ever saw were dead", words which were in time honed into a well-known American aphorism.

INDIAN LORE has it that the parents of Crazy Horse buried his remains at a secret place near *Chankpe Opi Wakpala*, a creek called Wounded Knee. If not apocryphal, the story adds an ironic footnote to the depressing history of the Indian Wars. For it was at Wounded Knee that the bitter hostilities that engaged the Plains Indians and the U.S. 7th Cavalry eventually achieved their denouement some thirteen years later, on a cold December morning in 1890. In the closing days of that year a new messianic religion preached by a Paiute medicine man, Wovoka, began to spread among the Sioux. Wovoka taught a special "Ghost Dance" that, pursued to the point of frenzied exhaustion, promised to bridge the gap between this world and that of the dead warriors of the past.[3] He said that

[1] See Brigadier-General S. L. A. Marshall's engaging military history of the Indian Wars, *Crimsoned Prairie* (1972), p. 155.

[2] There is a large literature reflecting the fascination which Americans have always had for Custer. For an extensive and balanced selection of materials, consult Colonel W. A. Graham's *The Custer Myth: A Source Book of Custeriana* (1953).

[3] The classic study of Wovoka's millenarian religion is that of James Mooney, *The Ghost Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890* (1896); edited and abridged by Anthony Wallace and republished by the University of Chicago (1965).

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in the spring these fallen braves would return to roam the plains. So would the buffalo that had once covered the land. And the white man would be driven away forever. He urged believers in his prophecies to wear specially-painted ghost shirts, whose magic symbols, he promised, would protect them from the white man's bullets.

The Ghost Dance religion spread quickly to Dakota territory and sects sprang up at Cheyenne River, at Rosebud and at Pine Ridge; and with some initial reluctance the great chief Sitting Bull himself condoned the new religion at Standing Rock. But, at this point, alarmed Bureau of Indian Affairs agents notified the Army. Sitting Bull, "the killer of Custer", who had shortly before been a star attraction when he toured throughout the United States and Canada with Buffalo Bill Cody's Wild West Show, was arrested —and soon slain in a needless, confused shoot-out between his incensed supporters and Indian police officers assigned to guard him.

The leader of the Minneconjous band, Big Foot, on hearing of Sitting Bull's death, set out with his people for Pine Ridge, where he sought the protection of the last remaining great Sioux chief, Red Cloud. But en route, seriously ill with pneumonia and haemorrhaging badly, Red Cloud (who had by now been ordered to be arrested as "a fomentor of disturbances") was overtaken by four troops of the 7th Cavalry and ordered held at a nearby army camp at Wounded Knee. Next morning the captive Indians were herded together and ordered to surrender their arms. Then, as the soldiers continued their search of the Indians' tents and belongings, a rifle belonging to a young Minneconjou, Black Coyote, was fired into the air. Immediately the jumpy cavalrymen opened fire. They were supported by a battery of repeating Hotchkiss guns strategically placed round the perimeter of the camp during the preceding night.

GENERAL GEORGE CUSTER

WHEN THE SHOOTING SUBSIDED most of the Indians, almost all of them unarmed, were dead. As a blizzard set in the same day the dead and seriously wounded were left in the places where they had fallen. When a burial party returned later to dig a common trench grave for Big Foot and his braves they found their bodies frozen in grotesque shapes in the deep snow. The surviving Sioux (four men and 47 women and children) had in the meantime been loaded into wagons for shipment to a military prison in Omaha.

Twenty-five U.S. soldiers were also killed at Wounded Knee, and 39 more were wounded (out of a total of 470 troopers), some of them probably hit by the bullets of their fellow cavalrymen. Later, eighteen soldiers received Congressional Medals of Honour for "gallantry, bravery, and conspicuous heroism in action" at the "victory" at Wounded Knee.[4] *Deus misereatur*: the U.S. 7th wreaked its final vengeance for the destruction of General Custer and his hapless troopers at the Little Big Horn.

THE 19TH-CENTURY Indian Wars make up a characteristically New World tale,[5] with its full complement of the showy violence, larger-than-life heroics, and moral lessons that seem so inimitably a part of the American past. Played out as they were on a stage remote from urban centres of population, the original clashes readily achieved the status of a popular spectator sport in a nation which has always had a special genius for the genre. The story line was embellished by dramatic newspaper accounts that trickled Eastward from the Western scenes of

[4] According to Eugene Meyer (writing in the *Washington Post*, 4 October 1971), the National Park Service Badlands Museum "emphasizes that fierce 'hand to hand' combat marked the 'battle' of Wounded Knee. The fiction that what happened . . .was a fierce 'battle' and a reflection of Indian 'hostility' persists in government roadside markers."

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battle, thus becoming the natural precursors of an endless string of thrill-packed epics about cowboys and Indians later made in Hollywood film studios.

In fact, the actual historical script had been decided long before the last scene was played and the curtain rung down at Wounded Knee. It was sadly evident years before the grisly 1890 massacre that, in their fight for survival against a vigorous young civilisation, vastly superior in numbers and technological resources and pressing ever Westward in search of free land and precious metals, a tribal people whose subsistence was linked to the migratory hunting of sharply declining herds of prairie buffalo would succumb to the odds. The actual manner in which the final result was achieved was no credit to either side. For the Indian's enmity towards the white intruder into his traditional lands pushed him to cruel and desperate acts. And the frontiersman, as Professor Frantz writes:

> ranked [the Indian] somewhere below the dog. Certainly the Indian was well below the Negro slave, for the latter had function and utility. How do you handle an element for which there is no positive use? You exterminate it, especially if in your eyes it has murderous propensities.[6]

It would be needlessly simplistic to explain these sad conclusions as entirely attributable to America's endemic racialism. Not all Americans were Indian-haters. Indeed, the attitude of many God-fearing migrants to the New World was rather one of ambivalence. A curious fascination with the red-skinned primitives who awaited their arrival combined with a sense of unease and apprehension at the Indian's constant presence at the periphery of their lonely wilderness existence. Someone has quipped that pioneering America was the area between Europe and the Indian. Certainly the ideological imagination was fired by the possibilities inherent in the spectacular collision of "barbarian" and "civilised" cultures. It is hardly surprising that for the earliest settlers, nurtured in the Puritan ethos, the uneasy rivalry between savage and newcomer would find its place in a Christian eschatology that saw the relationship as merely an element of a larger cosmic struggle between good and evil forces. But early America was also a frontier society self-consciously striving to break away from the European past. It was enamoured of the simple virtues of life close to nature. Sentiments more respectful of the dignity of the Red Man, which depicted him admiringly as no less than the Noble Savage incarnate, played themselves off against the severe religious account of the matter. The result of the unresolved tension was that, in America, Indians

> were alternately regarded as the descendants of Adam and the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel or Satan's demons who would make America the headquarters of Gog and Magog in the titanic holocaust before the Last Days.[7]

And thus, perhaps, the fascination of Americans with the Indian Wars and the special meaning for them of Wounded Knee and Custer's Last Stand—indeed, of the very titles of such recent best-sellers as Dee Brown's *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, and Edgar Kahn's *Our Brother's Keeper*, *The Indian in White America* and, no less apposite, of Vine Deloria Jr.'s *Custer Died for Your Sins*, and his *Of Utmost*

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[4] Just as I noted earlier that "America" was used throughout as synonymous with "United States", so too I am writing exclusively with reference to Indians in the United States.

While Canada shares with its Southern neighbour the characteristic of having a substantial indigenous Indian population, the history of the treatment of Indians there, while in some respects similar, exhibits marked differences of emphasis, reflecting differences in historical development and the nature of federalism in the two instances. The major governmental document reviewing the development of Indian affairs in Canada through the early 1960s is H. B. Hawthorn (ed.), *A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada. A Report on Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies* (2 Vols., Indian Affairs Branch, 1966), especially Vol. 1 (H. A. C. Cairns, S. M. Jamieson, and K. Lysyk, authors), Chapters IV, XI–XVIII.

For two recent books by Canadian Indians, setting out versions of "Red Power" and integrationist arguments, respectively, see Harold Cardinal, *Unjust Society* (1969), and William I. C. Wuttunee, *Ruffled Feathers: Indians in Canadian Society* (1971). A useful general survey is provided by Gerald Walsh, *Indians in Transition* (1971).

Finally, for what it is worth, Margaret Atwood has argued in her recent *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* (1972), p. 92, that in Canadian literature Indians have typically been portrayed in the dualistic imagery and symbolism of *Victor/Victim* rather than, as in the United States, as *Good Guy/Bad Guy*. The distinction, she claims, is worth making: for whereas "The Americans . . . go in for moral definitions based on intrinsic qualities Indians are thought to possess; a rather racist approach . . . Canadians, on the other hand, zero in on the relative place of Indians and whites on the aggression-suffering scale."

[6] See Joe B. Frantz, "The Frontier Tradition; An Invitation to Violence", in H. D. Graham and T. R. Gurr (eds), *Violence in America* (A Report Submitted to the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, 1969), pp. 127–154.

[7] Charles L. Sanford, *The Quest for Paradise* (1961), p. 91.

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Good Faith. For there is something of the atmosphere of a morality play about these and other books like them that readily lends itself to the encouragement of what Kenneth Minogue has referred to as the fashionable idea of national guilt.[8]

"A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS" was the way John F. Kennedy once described the United States. He was referring to the nearly 50 million Americans who since the 17th century have migrated from elsewhere in perhaps the most massive, sustained movement of people in recorded history. A much longer historical perspective is required in order to include in the generalisation the so-called Native Americans, the red-skinned Indians who arrived in the Western hemisphere from Asia thousands of years ago.

Long before the opening of America to settlement by white Europeans, Indian tribes, comprising a total population variously estimated by anthropologists at anywhere from one to twelve millions, roamed across some 1.2 billions of acres of virgin land. By the close of the 19th-century Indian Wars their population had been reduced to perhaps a quarter of a million and, under terms of a lengthy list of one-sided treaties concluded between 1778 and 1871, the land remaining in Indian hands to a total of 140 million acres.

The interpenetration of Indian and white cultures was inevitable. From the earliest colonial days this fact of life was reflected first in the provisions for protecting the states against invasion by Indian nations which were incorporated in the original Articles of Confederation, and next in the provisions of the 1789 U.S. Constitution for the regulation of commerce with the Indian tribes.[9] At first, reciprocal good will was evinced, epitomised on the colonists' side in the ringing declaration of the Northwest Territory Ordinance of 1787: "*The utmost good faith shall always be observed towards the Indians.*"

But the realities of life in pioneering America soon made a travesty of such high-minded pronouncements. Life in the wilderness was a no-man's-land where individual atrocities continued unabated on both sides and sporadically flared up into substantial efforts of warfare. In 1830 the Indian Removal Act authorised the resettlement of eastern tribes on reservation lands west of the Mississippi. And the following year Chief Justice John Marshall of the U.S. Supreme Court held (majority decision, *Cherokee Nation v. the State of Georgia*) that territory held by Indian tribes under treaty arrangements rendered them alike in foreign affairs and in commerce subject to the sovereign authority of the U.S. government. Indians, he argued, were not properly foreign nations but "domestic dependent nations . . . in a state of pupilage."[10] It remained only for the unfolding of the individual chapters of what Samuel Eliot Morison has called "the dismal story" of U.S.-Indian relations in the remaining decades of the 19th century.[11]

WITH THE WANING OF THE FRONTIER and the end of serious Indian military resistance, a new phase of Indian policy was ushered in with the passage of the Indian Allotment Act of 1887. Under its terms the reservation system of communal landholding was to be abolished as a means of encouraging the assimilation of the surviving Indian population into the mainstream of American life (reservation lands ceded in treaties were to be broken up into individual holdings of 160 acres each). The assimilationist philosophy of the legislation was hardly intended to benefit the Indian alone. Excess land remaining after allotment reverted to the Federal government, which in turn made it available to homesteaders—with the result that between 1887 and 1934 the 140 million acres of land originally ceded to Indian tribes under treaty arrangements had further declined to 50 million acres. The allotment system had a further consequence, the repercussions of which have continued to exercise an influence in Indian affairs down to the present time. For the administration of the Act contributed to the growth in influence of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (first established in the War Department as early as 1824, and transferred in 1849 to the new Department of the Interior). The scope of its activities is suggested in the fact that today the Indian Affairs manual fills 33 volumes; and more than 2000 regulations, 389 treaties, 5000 statutes and 500 opinions of the

[8] See Kenneth Minogue, "On the Fashionable Idea of National Guilt", *American Scholar* (Spring 1970), pp. 211–218.

[9] *Articles of Confederation*, Article VI; *Constitution of the United States*, Article I, Section 8.

[10] See Jennings C. Wise and Vine Deloria Jr., *The Red Man in the New World Drama* (1971), p. 217ff.

[11] Samuel Eliot Morison, "Indians, Cattle and Cowboys", in his humane *Oxford History of the American People* (1965), p. 750ff.

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Attorney-General apply to the administration of Indian affairs.[12] It certainly lends credence to the charges of those who decry the "excessive paternalism" of the BIA.

The practice of allotment ended in 1934, with the passage of President Franklin Roosevelt's Indian Reorganisation Act. Drawn up under the *aegis* of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, John Collier, an anthropologist knowledgeable in Indian ways who was to lead the fight for the concept of Indian cultural survival during his tenure of office, the Act turned away from the crude assimilationist viewpoint. It opted instead for the rudiments of reservation self-government and economic development. Moreover, it legalised Indian religious observances traditionally banned on the reservations, and introduced a policy of priority hiring of Indians at the BIA. Although Indians were granted full American citizenship earlier (in 1924), reformers generally trace the beginnings of their long, faltering climb to first-class citizenship from 1934. And in an extension of the "New Deal" philosophy of the Indian Reorganisation Act, the Congress established in 1946 an Indian Claims Commission, to settle grievances of the various tribes against the Federal government. During its original five-year charter the Commission received some 800 claims. Since then its mandate has been repeatedly extended by the Congress, so that, under present legislation, it is to remain in existence until at least April 1977. The Commission has been a forum for the airing of a wide range of Indian grievances, though generally speaking most of its judgments have taken the form of awards of financial compensation for lands claimed by Indian tribes under traditional title. Some militant spokesmen believe this to be an unsatisfactory result, holding, perhaps a little ingenuously, that "to a people desperately in need of an adequate land base for an expanding population, the cash settlements have been a poor redress for centuries of exploitation."[13] Such criticisms fly in the face of the tangible successes that Indian groups have to date achieved before the Commission, including the spectacular ruling of 1971 under which the Federal government agreed to return 40 million acres of land and to pay $962 million in compensation to the Indians and Eskimos of Alaska for the loss of oil-rich lands to which they held traditional claims.

THE PARADOXICAL RESULT of any sign of improvement in the Indians' plight was that public opinion shifted to the view that Federal responsibility for Indian affairs should be phased out altogether. The Hoover Commission of 1948 concluded as much; and in the summer of 1953, House Concurrent Resolution 108 declared it to be the policy of Congress henceforth "as rapidly as possible to make the Indians . . . subject to the same laws and entitled to the same privileges and responsibilities as are applicable to other citizens of the United States."

But the abrupt reversal of field, whatever its theoretical justifications, proved to be disastrous both in those concrete instances where termination was actually attempted and, more generally, in its effect upon morale in the larger Indian community. And by the end of the '50s, the policy was quietly discarded. In its stead, the "New Frontier" and "War on Poverty" programmes of the John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson administrations sought to alleviate the Indians' persisting hardships. They poured millions of dollars into the development of educational facilities and community services on the reservations. One result was the return to the reservations of young educated Indians who hitherto, lacking job opportunities at home, had represented a steady and debilitating drain of potential leadership talent away from the reservations to the cities. Most Indian spokesmen readily acknowledge that in the long-range perspective of U.S.-Indian relations, the reforming 1960s were a decade of tangible improvements for the Indian people, building further upon the foundations provided by the earlier Indian Reorganisation Act. But what was still lacking, most felt, was any clear programme for encouraging the growth of indigenous economic institutions on the reservations themselves. Democratic reform programmes, however well-intentioned, it was argued, were in their effects no less paternalistic than had been the case hitherto. Operation Headstart and the Neighbourhood Youth Corps rendered the Native American no less dependent on the government for his economic well-being than he had always been.

IT WAS AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND that President Richard Nixon delivered a major address to

[12] See Richard C. Schroeder, "Preservation of Indian Culture", *Editorial Research Reports* (18 November 1972), p. 862.

[13] Jennings C. Wise and Vine Deloria Jr., *The Red Man in the New World Drama* (1971), p. 362.

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Congress on 8 July 1970, outlining a programme for the reorganisation of Federal policies towards the American Indian that was in its scope the most ambitious plan since Roosevelt's Indian Reorganisation Act of 1934.

In his remarks, the President called on Congress to pass a new concurrent resolution expressly rejecting the premises of its 1953 declaration, and he outlined a new policy which he termed "self-determination without termination", as a way "to strengthen the Indian's sense of autonomy without threatening his sense of community."[14] He submitted proposed enabling legislation that would result in the tribes taking over control of many programmes currently administered on their behalf by the BIA and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare; that would establish an independent trust counsel authority to assist tribes in protecting their natural resources from exploitation; increase revolving loan funds for on-reservation economic development; assist in the development of new Indian-controlled educational facilities; and create an assistant secretary for Indian Affairs. That a new era in government policy towards Indians was at hand seemed further evidenced in the record levels of funding for Indian programmes in recent years. BIA appropriations rose from $243 million in 1968 to over $530 million in 1973, while overall Federal expenditures for Indians climbed from $455 million to $925 million in the same period.

BUT CONGRESS has to date failed to enact any of the ex-President's proposed new legislation, leaving the Federal side of the handling of Indian affairs in the hands of Washington bureaucrats and Interior Department factions. Political control on the reservations rests with elected tribal councils who find themselves, at a time when the Federal mood favours greater reservation autonomy and seems willing to back up its predilections with increased appropriations for council administration, the centre of a mounting storm over charges of corruption, favouritism and mismanagement of tribal affairs.

[14] The full text of the message is given in *Congressional Quarterly, Weekly Report*, XXVIII (29), 17 July 1970, pp. 1820–1824.

[15] See, for example, Robert C. Day, "The Emergence of Activism as a Social Movement", in Howard M. Bahr, B. A. Chadwick and Robert C. Day (eds), *Native Americans Today: Sociological Perspectives* (1972), pp. 506–532.

IN THE YEARS which have elapsed since the passage of the Indian Reorganisation Act, successive groups, all claiming to be the authentic voice of the Native American, have arisen on the national stage. Their tone, in a development uncannily reminiscent of the course of Negro political protest in recent decades, grew more militant with the passage of time and the apparent paucity of concrete solutions to the plight of the Indian in 20th-century American society.

First came the National Congress of American Indians, founded in 1944 as a moderate reformist organisation (with affinities to the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People) that successfully applied pressure for the creation of the Indian Claims Commission of 1946. Next came the National Indian Youth Council which grew out of a conference held in Chicago during 1961, and which, like the Student Non-Violent Co-ordinating Committee in relation to its parent Southern Christian Leadership Conference, represented a more youthful and radical voice, grown impatient with the cautious reformism of the older generation.[15] Soon special purpose interest groups, such as the Indians of All Tribes coalition that coordinated the Indians of the San Francisco Bay area and their white supporters in the occupation of Alcatraz Island during 1969, made their appearance. And already by then efforts had been made to organise non-reservation Indians, both by the American Indians United and, more successfully, by the militant American Indian Movement, or "AIM", organised in Minneapolis in 1966 as the spokesman for the urban Indian slum dweller.

The course of Indian political protest, like its black American counterpart, thus seemed to be traversing the same road from Moderate Integrationism to Cultural Nationalism to Red Power.

THERE ARE OVER 300 separate linguistic and tribal groupings of Indians in the United States, living on reservations and in the cities. The heaviest concentrations are in Arizona, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Alaska and California. In May 1973 the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights concluded after an intensive study of the treatment of Indians in Arizona and New Mexico that the Indians in those states were easily the most deprived of minority groups. And several surveys released by the Bureau of the Census to date (based on 1970 census returns) have since confirmed the Commission's findings.

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The Indian suicide rate is twice the national average. Reservation unemployment is eight times higher than in the nation at large, as is the incidence amongst Indians of tuberculosis. Some 70% of reservation housing is estimated to be sub-standard. The median income of Indian families was $5,832 in 1969 as compared to the national median of $9,590. Moreover, the Bureau found that nearly 40% of Indians were living below the poverty line, as against 13·7% of the total U.S. population.[16]

On the other hand, there was some less discouraging news in the census figures. The Bureau reported that the "Vanishing American" was not vanishing at all. The Indian population had more than doubled since 1950, raising the total numbers from 343,410 to the 1970 figure of 792,730.[17] In that period dramatic public health gains had added four years to Indian life expectancy and cut the infant mortality rate in half so that, as against a general national growth rate of 1·3% in the 1960s and 1·8% in the 1950s, the growth of the Indian population in the two decades had proceeded at a rate of upwards of 5% a year. By 1970, the median age of the American Indian stood at 20 years, a full eight years less than the median age of 28 for the general population.

ENCOURAGING SIGNS also appeared in education. Government educational programmes on the reservations obviously constituted a travesty of social justice. As recently as 1969 a special Senate Subcommittee on Indian Education (chaired by Senator Edward Kennedy) professed to be "shocked at what we discovered" in the course of an investigation of existing facilities. It concluded its report by asserting that "our Nation's policies and programs for educating American Indians are a national tragedy."[18] But by 1970 there was no denying that improvements were underway. According to the census returns of that year, 95% of Indian children from 7 to 13 years of age, and more than half the Indians from 13 to 24, are now attending school. The number attending colleges and universities more than doubled between 1960 and 1970.

Today, roughly half the total Indian population lives in urban areas; and there are some 35 cities with populations over 50,000 which have at least 1000 Indian residents. 70% of the males among these are employed as craftsmen and foremen, operatives, labourers and service workers; a further 9% hold positions in the technical and professional sectors. In the decades since 1930, when only 10% of their total number were city dwellers, American Indians have in fact achieved the largest proportional growth in urbanisation of any ethnic group in the United States, including Blacks.[19] The shift from the Reservation to the City has been accompanied by a tendency unmatched in the proclivities of other ethnic groups towards inter-racial mating. While studies suggest that inter-racial marriage among major ethnic groupings occurs in less than 1% of all cases, the 1970 census revealed that in the decade just passed roughly one-third of male American Indians marrying had taken as their mates non-Indians, and that the number of Indian women marrying non-Indians was even higher, having doubled in the same period.

Clearly, the pace and character of recent Indian urbanisation attest to the efforts made by considerable numbers of Indians to come to terms with the realities of life in 20th-century America.[20]

AND YET, TRY AS THEY MAY, Indians continue to be dogged, to a degree unparalleled in the treatment accorded to other minorities in America, by a general caricature of their races as "a Tonto to the white man's Lone Ranger."

Thus, when Dr Ann Buff of the University of Pennsylvania set out recently to research racial stereotypes among pre-school children, she found

[16] *New York Times*, 17 July 1973, p. 14. The 1969 median income figure for Blacks was $6,308; and for Americans of Spanish origin $7,534. Some 32% of Negro families fell below the poverty line.

[17] *St Petersburg Times*, 21 October 1971. The Bureau gives this further 1970 breakdown of U.S. population by race: White, 177,748,975; Negroes, 22,580,289; Japanese, 591,290; Chinese, 435,062; Filipino, 343,060; and all others (including Koreans, Hawaiians, Aleuts, Eskimos, Malayans and Polynesians) 720,520.

[18] Alvin M. Josephy Jr. (ed.), *Red Power: The American Indians' Fight for Freedom* (1971), p. 174.

[19] See E. J. Kahn Jr., "Who, What, Where, How Much, How Many", Part Two, *The New Yorker*, 22 October 1973, pp. 112–113.

[20] More impressionistic evidence of these efforts is provided in the numerous individual examples that readily come to mind when one thinks of American Indian contributions to the rich and variegated cultural mosaic of American civilisation: the names of outstanding athletes like Jim Thorpe, or modern "warriors" such as Ira Hayes who helped raise the U.S. flag over Iwo Jima, and Sergeant Ernest Rice, a Winnebago hero of the Korean War, and Leroy Shenandoah, a pallbearer at John Kennedy's funeral, or artists of the calibre of the Kiowa writer N. Scott Momaday who in 1969 won the Pulitzer Prize for his novel *House Made of Dawn*. A useful bibliographical synopsis of recent American Indian cultural contributions is provided in Vine Deloria Jr., *God is Red* (1973), Chapter 3, "Indians of America", pp. 39–56.

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that white children in the 3-to-5 age-group could not differentiate "Indian" from "White" dolls unless some of the dolls were outfitted in buckskins and feathers, and that the white children made comments like "There aren't any Indians today" and "Indians kill people."[21] Another study, which examined the treatment of Indians and Negroes in some 67 textbooks in American history published during the 1960s, found that there was little more than token treatment, and that it tended to reinforce the primitivist stereotype. An analysis of *Saturday Evening Post* cartoons concluded that the typical depiction of the American Indian was as "a primitive, historical bow-and-arrow type who has no place in the modern society."[22]

In the face of such pervasive racialist stereotyping it has been typically the case that for every Indian who has risen high in the fields of education, business, government and the arts, many others have given up hope, have become defeatist, and allowed themselves to sink further into the morass of chronic unemployment and alcoholism, in isolation from the mainstream of modern life. The pattern has persisted and represents a fundamental challenge to the reformist resolve of the committed integrationist. It has also doubtless contributed to the strength of those young militants who argue the case that the path to racial rejuvenation for the dispirited Native American lies in the cultivation of Indian cultural nationalism—a goal to be achieved by rejecting the values of white America and adopting in their stead those of a reborn tribalism.

Whatever their superficial similarities (as Professor Elie Kedourie has reminded us) tribalism is not the same thing as nationalism.[23] And yet, in the case of American Indians, there is unquestionably an intimate connection between the two. In the anthropological perspective, the very word "Indian" is something of an anomaly. Many Native Americans, indeed, dislike the word and prefer to be identified by the name of their tribe, a reminder of the rich cultural and linguistic diversity that flourished in North America before the grammatical parsimony of the European settler led to the adoption of the shorthand rubric "Indian." It was a descriptive term without regard to tribal distinctions of the red-skinned inhabitants he found awaiting his arrival and his so-called "discovery" of them.

With the development of the reservation system, government policy had by the 1870s accomplished a more concrete obliteration of pristine tribalism, and unwittingly set the stage for the rise of a generalised "Indian" sense of trans-reservation communality. For while tribalism based itself upon a notion of cultural autonomy determined by extended blood-ties, the physical separation of tribes (on tracts of land ceded by U.S. government treaty on the premise that Native Americans made up a special class) implied the idea of cross-tribal nationalism or pan-Indianism.[24] And once introduced, the idea actually gained in strength whenever plans for assimilating "the Indian" into the mainstream of American life, no matter how well-intentioned, were brought into play. A compelling example of this paradoxical phenomenon in U.S.-Indian relations—indeed, now intensified by a growing awareness on the part of once-isolated reservation Indians of the plight of other tribes and of non-Indian minorities (an awareness made possible by increased mobility and the sophistication of modern communications)—is provided by the contemporary recrudescence of Indian cultural nationalism in the face of serious efforts to improve the lot of the Indian.

THE CURRENT FLOWERING of Indian Nationalism has taken many forms. The new cultural pride involves an assertion of parity for (and even the superiority of) Indian ways in relation to those of other Americans. As a Hunkpapa Sioux recently put it, Indians

> must be patient with the guests on our continent. They behave like infants. . . . But they are going to

[21] Diane Samms, "Indians Seen as Bad Guys in the Eyes of Children", *Times-Miami-Herald Service*, 15 April 1973. An interesting example of stereotyping in social science literature occurs in Georges Sorel's *Reflections on Violence* (1908). Sorel notes that "Politicians are people whose wits are singularly sharpened by their voracious appetites, and in whom the hunt for the fat jobs develops the cunning of Apaches. . . ." Whether one views the stereotype as negative (or not) will, of course, depend upon one's view of politicians. Certainly in the case of Sorel himself it was intended to be interpreted pejoratively. For him, indeed, the suggestion that Indians shared any of the attributes of the politician was the worst insult of all, despising politicians as he did.

[22] For reports of both these studies, see L. H. Bowker, "Red and Black in Contemporary American History Texts: A Content Analysis", and K. C. Houts and R. S. Bahr, "Stereotyping of Indians and Blacks in Magazine Cartoons" in Bahr, Chadwick and Days (eds.), *Native Americans Today: Sociological Perspectives* (1972), pp. 101–114.

[23] Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism* (1961), pp. 74–75. The tribesman is so naturally, by birth; the nationalist only by rational self determination.

[24] See, for example, Robert K. Thomas, "Pan-Indianism", in Stuart Levine and Nancy O. Lurie (eds), *The American Indian Today* (1972), p. 132.

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grow up. They are going to mature. We have a guest-host relationship with blacks, with whites, with Asians. We have to treat them with gentleness . . . as we do our own children.[25]

This "new tribalism" has meant the revitalisation of reservation culture, the revival of traditional religion, and demands for a revisionist Indian-white history. The new mood is reflected in the foundation of Indian Studies programmes, in the creation of new Indian journals and the widespread interest in Indian art and crafts. It is also seen, not only in the rash of popular best-sellers by Dee Brown and others, but in the appearance of a new *genre* of Hollywood Western where (as in such films as *Soldier Blue, Tell Them Willie Boy is Here*, and *Little Big Man*) the one-time standard villain in the saga of the Golden West has been recast as a stoically dignified red-skinned sufferer, victimised by the violent and rapacious White Man.

The media, too, have dutifully kept us abreast of the changing Indian cultural awareness. Thus, in a much-publicised human interest story, a Chippewa Indian from San Francisco, Adam Nordwill, recently flew to Rome to "discover" Italy. He explained to newsmen that if Columbus could "discover" America in 1492 when Indians had been there for centuries, then Native Americans were entitled to do the same thing to Italy.[26] In May 1972 the National Institute of Mental Health announced it was paying Navaho medicinemen on a reservation in Arizona to teach young Indians chants and sand-painting—because traditional Indian techniques seemed better than the white man's psychotherapy for treating mental disorders on the reservations. Meanwhile, back in Des Moines, Iowa, Governor Robert Ray ordered the remains of five Indian graves (salvaged from a construction site and believed to date from the 12th or 13th centuries) taken off display after Indian protesters claimed that the spectacle offended their racial sensitivities. They suggested that the white man dig up the skeletons of Washington or Lincoln if he wanted bones to put in his museums. And, in another incident illustrating Indian racial sensitivities, a demand by militant American Indian Movement leaders in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, that the School Board change the name of that city's Custer High School as its namesake was "a murderer and a rapist", was quietly dropped. School Superintendent Richard Gousha had pointed out that the school was not named after the famous 7th Cavalry General at all, but after an obscure 19th-century local constable, one Harvey Custer.

Quite aside from such activist attempts cleverly to grab the headlines, the new Indian mood is reflected in ambitious attempts to defend the values of Tribal Nationalism and the closed society of the Indian past. Indeed, if the better-known "Black Power" movement first engendered "the new tribalism" of contemporary ethnic politics in the U.S.A., the concurrent "Red Power" movement has been the quintessence of the retreat from the values of the open, integrated society its champions seek to replace. For it has been built explicitly on an affirmation of the theoretical claims of tribalism.

And in this enterprise the most influential figure has without question been Vine Deloria Jr. Deloria has been called "the Rousseau of the new Indians",[27] and I will be turning to him in my next article.

[25] Gary Blonston, "Last Americans: Indians Not in the Mainstream", *Times-Miami-Herald Service*, 11 April 1973.

[26] A UPI report (15 October 1972) suggested that a North Carolina Indian newspaper, *Cherokee One Feather*, was taking a different line of attack on Columbus, arguing that the U.S. practice of celebrating Columbus Day was a "racist insult" to Indians and honoured "a trader in Indian slaves."

[27] See: Stan Steiner, *The New Indians* (1968), p. 26.

Matsuo Basho Tries Again

Luminous flutter
of wings over grass. Oh—a
cellophane wrapper!

Gerda Mayer

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A. L. Rowse

Byron's Friend, Bankes

A Portrait

SINCE ANNABELLA MILBANKE was an heiress there were several suitors for her hand, if not precisely for herself. One of them had been a friend of Byron at Cambridge, a remarkable man who had an arresting career as traveller, collector, and connoisseur—less so as a politician, though he sat in several Parliaments for a variety of seats. Byron told Lady Blessington, "he is very clever, very original and has a fund of information; he is also very good-natured, but he is not much of a flatterer. . . ."

This was William John Bankes of the old Dorset family of Kingston Lacy, son and heir of rich Henry Bankes of Corfe Castle and Kingston. Highly intelligent and good-looking, a young man with £8,000 a year of his own and already an estate in Flintshire, Soughton Hall, which he had inherited from a Welsh Wynne—one would have thought him suitable enough for precious Miss Milbanke. But she turned him down, as she turned down Byron at first—they had that experience in common also.

Whether she would have done better with William Bankes than with Byron, we shall see.

In 1812 this priggish girl, the idol of her parents, is writing of William Bankes: "one of my smiles would encourage him, but I am niggardly of my glances." The young man called so often that she thought of returning his cards, as she said archly, "for his own pocket's sake." Dismissed as a suitor, he was well out of it.

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So was Byron, for the time. But Byron remained in touch, and wrote cheerfully:

> "my equally unlucky friend, William Bankes paid me a visit one evening last winter, with an aspect so utterly disconsolate that I could not resist inquiring into the cause. After much hesitation on his part . . . out it came, with tears in his eyes almost, that he has added another name to our unfortunate list. The coincidence appeared to me so ludicrous that not to laugh was impossible, when I told him that a few weeks before a similar proposal had left me in the same situation. We were the Heraclitus and Democritus of your suitors."

Annabella wrote back complacently, "I was rather sorry (though probably *they* would not believe me) for Bankes and Douglas, who are both clever and excellent men and attached to you."

BUT BLUE-STOCKING ANNABELLA was ultimately carried away by the astonishing fame Byron achieved with *Childe Harold.* He had presented Bankes with a copy, and William had good-naturedly lent it to Annabella—an ironic concatenation, considering what was to follow. Having caught the man she fancied (she became Lady Byron in 1815), she was able to tell Byron that William Bankes was now at Granada: "I am afraid he will hear of *us* with pain—yet he cannot *lose* hope, for I never allowed it to exist."

THE YEAR WAS the exciting one, 1812, of Napoleon's invasion of Russia and the disastrous retreat from Moscow. Bankes had been M.P. for Truro for the past two years; he now resigned to follow in his junior's footsteps and travel abroad. His journeys took him much further afield and lasted far longer than the sensational Childe Harold's: he did not return for seven years, and he made something of a contribution to Egyptian archaeology.

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Bankes applied to Byron for introductions abroad, and Byron wrote: "the multitude of your recommendations has already superseded my humble endeavours to be of use to you." However, he supplied some for Gibraltar in glowing terms, describing William as "a gentleman of the first distinction in character, family and fortune." Byron hoped to join him later in the summer: "mind you visit Ephesus and the Troad"—but added: "trust not the Greeks"; he was also to take along watches and pistols for presents to Beys and Pashas. They did not meet again for seven years.

They had become friends at Trinity, Cambridge. Byron resented being sent to Cambridge by his guardians, when he wanted to go to Oxford, whither several of his Harrow friends had preceded him. He described himself as

> "wretched at going to Cambridge instead of Oxford (there were no rooms vacant at Christ Church). . . . I quitted the society of my earliest associates, who are all alumni of the latter, to drag on a weary term at a place where I had many acquaintances but few friends. I therefore can never consider Granta as my Alma Mater, but rather as a nurse of no very promising appearance, on whom I have been forced against *her* inclination and contrary to *mine*."

He had gone up at 17½ in 1805—and he was still resentful in 1807. In consequence he was very idle; and it was then that Bankes took him up. Years later Byron told Murray that Bankes had been his "collegiate pastor, and master and patron, who ruled the roast—or rather the roasting—and was the father of all mischiefs." But Byron was indebted to Bankes for more: "I have more of Scott's novels (for surely they are Scott's) since we met [in 1819], and am more and more delighted. I think that I even prefer them to his poetry, which (by the way) I read for the first time in my life in your rooms in Trinity College." Then William had been "good-naturedly tolerant of my ferocities"; later, Byron regarded him as one of the three people who extended a finger to help him through the troubles on the breakdown of his marriage.

WE NOTE A DEFINITE SENSE of inferiority in Byron's attitude—he defers to Bankes's criticisms of his poems, amends them in accordance with his suggestions. At the same time, he is touchy, finds William patronising—Bankes was much richer and more assured, no less handsome, and not lamed for life. Byron's first two letters to him are mainly concerned with Bankes's criticisms of *Poems on Various Occasions*, his first publicly published work (1807), which had been quite well noticed. But—"your Critique is valuable for many reasons . . . it is the only one in which flattery has borne so slight a part. . . . I am *cloyed* with insipid compliments and have a better opinion of your judgment and ability than your *feelings*." There is a great deal more about literary criticism, and then, in his next: "I cannot evince greater respect for your alteration than by immediately adopting it: this shall be done in the next edition. I am sorry your remarks are not more frequent, as I am certain they would be equally beneficial."

After excusing his verses as "the effusions of a boy", Byron was able to tell his senior, "on the same day I was honoured with the encomiums of Mackenzie, the celebrated author of *The Man of Feeling*: whether *his* approbation or *yours* elated me most I cannot decide." Then, "in the spring I shall go up to Trinity to dismantle my rooms and bid you a final adieu: the Cam will not be much increased by my tears on the occasion. . . ." It is fascinating to think how differently things might have worked out if Byron had had his way and come up to Oxford: different friends and associations, a different story.

THE AMBIVALENCE of Byron's attitude towards his mentor comes out in letters and exchanges. To Hobhouse, who had been a close friend of Bankes at Trinity, he wrote: "I have had a letter from Bankes, of the patronising kind, where I am invited to '*one* of *my places* in Wales'. . . ." Bankes had already inherited his Flintshire estate from a great-uncle. Byron himself was now becoming known in the world and Bankes must have mentioned their acquaintance: "I am flattered by his boasting on such a subject, for I never thought him likely to boast of anything which was not his own."

William was already in Parliament. When he wrote for news, Byron answered: "how was I to find out a man of many residences? now at your borough [Truro] addressing constituents?" Byron gave way to his old sense of inferiority with a recital of the grand company he was keeping at Cheltenham: Jerseys, Melbournes, Cowpers, Hollands. They were the cream of Whig society —and Bankes was a Tory, a supporter of the war in the Peninsula, now beginning to pay dividends. After Wellington's victory at Salamanca, Byron wrote that it was now "the ministerial watchword and will go well with you. I hope you will speak

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more frequently, I am sure at least you *ought*." But Bankes gave up Parliament for his prolonged travels. At the end of his letter Byron signed himself in Greek characters: they shared Greek tastes.

BYRON TELLS US that Bankes did not like writing; and it is to this that he owes his non-recognition among the remarkable company of travellers then penetrating the Levant and beyond, leaving a fascinating body of travel literature. We learn about Bankes's journeys mainly from a curious rare book, dictated by his Italian courier.[1] Finati had had various adventures under the Albanian Mehemet Ali, who had won power in Egypt: he had served under him—dressed as a Moslem and calling himself Hadji Mahamet—in the Massacre of the Mamelukes and the campaign against the fanatical Wahabis, penetrating to Mecca.

Bankes had begun his travels in the Peninsula where he picked up a faithful attendant, the Portuguese Antonio da Costa who accompanied him everywhere. He spent some time at Wellington's headquarters, and more at Granada. It was here in Spain that he developed his life-long passion for collecting pictures and art-objects. From Spain he moved on to Greece and thence to Egypt, where he made an expedition across the desert from Cairo to Mount Sinai, and then took Finati into his service for a long voyage up the Nile to Nubia. Bankes equipped a large vessel for the journey as far as the first cataract; at Wadi Halfa he changed to a small boat to go up to the second. All the way, as a good classical scholar keen on antiquities, he was exploring, penetrating chamber-tombs to take notes, above all drawing monuments and temples, and copying the ancient wall-paintings and hieroglyphics. Later on, he permitted his copy of the tablet at Abydos to be published as the frontispiece of Salt's *Hieroglyphics*. At Karnak he purchased a large papyrus. There must be silted up at Kingston Lacy a *cache* of his drawings and notes of his Egyptian expeditions, waiting for someone to edit.

BYRON & FRIEND (BANKES)

The first journey occupied him three months at the end of 1815—Waterloo year. At Philae he brought to light a half-buried obelisk, with twenty lines of Greek on the pedestal; he longed to uncover more of the temple with its four colossal figures. He frequently noted the ancient buildings being destroyed, and tombs being robbed; he realised the value of the ancient frescoes. When he finally left Egypt he paid his Italian doctor, Ricci, to continue the work of copying for him (it was not carried out). Bankes's footnotes to Finati's plain, straightforward narration are scholarly and informative, but—so far as I can make out—neglected and unknown.

The party returned to Cairo, where Bankes took up residence in the Catholic convent. He made the acquaintance of the traveller Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, who became so much better

[1] Translated and edited by Bankes, the *Life and Adventures* of Giovanni Finati was published in 1830 by John Murray in 2 volumes.

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known, for he at any rate published his travels. Finati accompanied Bankes across the desert to Jerusalem and on to Damascus. At Bethlehem they observed the ceremonies of the Greek Christmas; at Jerash, Bankes was much interested in the antiquities and the archaeological possibilities which have been found so richly rewarding in our time. They fell in company on a journey to Nazareth with James Silk Buckingham, who was anxious to travel with them, though "bearing no part in it either with his purse or with his pencil." This acquaintance led to trouble later.

Visiting ancient Tyre and Sidon they made for Lady Hester Stanhope's residence under Mount Lebanon, where Bankes remained over three weeks. We can check from her account that she had eagerly looked forward to a visit from him, as the person who could give her first-hand news of her friends at home. Odd as all the Pitts were, she was the most notorious in her Turkish male attire. Though she seldom left her compound, a former convent, she took Bankes to the sepulchre at Abu Ghyás of which he made two large drawings. She was much impressed by his drawings, less so by the "renegado Italian in Albanian costume" in his company. They made an expedition to her summer residence at Abra near the summit of the mountain; but Bankes did not wish to be beholden to her for a permit to cross the desert to Palmyra. After a visit to the Prince of the Druses, he parted from Finati at Antioch, embarking with Antonio da Costa for Cyprus.

Two years later when Bankes returned to Asia, meeting Finati at Acre for a journey round the Dead Sea and into Trans-Jordan, he again busied himself with drawing and observations—at one Roman amphitheatre he noticed the "sounding vases" described by Vitruvius. He had to disguise himself as a Moslem to penetrate into the forbidden parts of Jerusalem, the Temple enclosure, David's Tomb, etc. They journeyed further into Bedouin country, making for Baalbec and Palmyra (where Bankes noted a Hebrew inscription over a doorway). Embarking for Egypt, they were at first blown over to Cyprus, which Bankes knew already.

His aim was another expedition up the Nile to supervise the removal of the obelisk from Philae. They got some 150 miles beyond the second cataract, and looked at the excavations proceeding at Wadi Halfa. While attempting to lift the obelisk it fell into the river, to Bankes's disgust. Not until 1822 could it be moved, and it was not until 1829 that he got it brought to England, to set up in the garden at Kingston Lacy. One block of the pedestal weighed nearly eleven tons: it took nineteen horses to drag it into position there—and one can imagine the expense of it all!

Sailing from Alexandria to Trieste, Bankes at once renewed contact with Byron.

BYRON WAS MOST IMPRESSED by his former companion's exploits, and wrote home to Hobhouse, with a tinge of envy: "William Bankes hath made a stupendous traveller." And to John Murray: "Bankes *has* done *miracles* of research and enterprise—salute him [on his return]." "Bankes is a wonderful fellow; there is hardly one of my School and College contemporaries that has not turned out more or less celebrated." In the end, Bankes was more or less obliterated. But one cannot doubt that the achievements of Byron's contemporaries in the field of action spurred him on to achieve something in Greece.

Byron wrote from Venice in November 1819 that his child Allegra's illness prevented him from joining Bankes. But

> "I have not been ignorant of your progress nor of your discoveries. You may rely upon finding everybody in England eager to reap the fruits of them; and as you have done more than other men, I hope you will not limit yourself to the talents and time you have bestowed on your perilous researches. It is now seven years since you and I met—which time you have employed better for others and more honourably for yourself than I have done."

In England Bankes would find considerable changes, their old college contemporaries turned into Lords of the Treasury or Admiralty and what-not, "many settled in life, *as it is called.* At length you have had better fortune than any traveller of equal enterprise, except Humboldt, in returning safe. It is hardly less surprise than satisfaction to get you back again." Byron subscribed himself "ever and affectionately yours" and invited him to Venice, evidently only too glad to see an old English friend in his exile, acutely aware of the disapprobation of him rife in England. He and William would be able to condole with each other over their experiences with the "Princess of Parallelograms" (Lady Byron).

Bankes came over to visit Byron in the Palazzo Mocenigo on the Grand Canal. He was now writing *Don Juan*, but characteristically a remark

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of Bankes discouraged him. William repeated to him an unflattering remark of an English resident, one Saunders, to the effect that "*Don Juan* was all Grub Street." Byron was greatly mortified; and he confessed to William that for some time he couldn't write another line of it. One morning, opening a drawer, he caught sight of it, and said, "Look here—this is all Mr Saunders' Grub Street." Poets are kittle-kattle, and easily discouraged.

However, they evidently enjoyed the easy relaxation of each other's company, for in the new year, 1820, Byron is inviting William to Ravenna:

> "I have room for you in the house here . . . but do not expect to find the same gorgeous suite of tapestried halls. Neither dangers nor tropical heats have ever prevented your penetrating wherever you had a mind to it, and why should the snow now? Italian snow—fie on it!—so pray come. Tita's heart yearns for you, and mayhap for your silver broadpieces."

Tita was Byron's handsome and enticingly bearded gondolier. Byron would be invisible in the mornings,

> "but then all your evenings, and as much as you can give me of your nights, will be mine. Then, there are more cantos of what the courteous reader, Mr Saunders, calls Grub Street in my drawer—which I have a little scheme to commit to your charge for England. Only I must first cut up (or cut down) two aforesaid cantos into three, because I am grown base and mercenary, and it is an ill precedent to let my Maecenas, Murray, get too much for his money."

Byron was particularly anxious for Bankes to tell him all he could about Cyprus.

Meanwhile, William was stuck at Bologna, with an absolute fixation on a painting of the *Judgment of Solomon* in the Marescalchi Palace. Byron, no aesthete, wrote: "I know nothing of pictures myself, and care almost as little"—nevertheless he advised William to buy and take it home with him and put it in safety.

> "For be assured there are troublous times coming for Italy; and as I never could keep out of a row in my life, it will be my fate, I dare say, to be over head and ears in it. But no matter, these are the stronger reasons for coming to see me soon."

This referred to Byron's Carbonari connections. William remained long enough to acquire yet another picture—a huge Guido Reni canvas of *Dawn separating Day from Night*—which now covers the Library ceiling at Kingston Lacy. He then joined Byron at Ravenna, who reported home that he had taken William to a Ball and presented him to all the Ostrogothic nobility and to the Dama whom I serve." (This was the Countess Guiccioli, his "last attachment.") After the opera there was a lottery; "Bankes and I took tickets of it and buffooned together very merrily. He is gone to Firenze. . . ."

William was on his way home at last; Byron felt, no doubt, that *he* could never return to England.

BANKES CAME BACK to go on with his political career—which did not amount to much, and we need not concern ourselves with the all-too-familiar boredom of speeches in the House of Commons. He was a Tory, a supporter of the immovable Lord Liverpool, an opponent of Catholic Emancipation, and as such returned for a university seat at Cambridge in 1821. He went down not expecting to be elected and met his old tutor, who asked him whether he was in favour of the Catholics. When he said No, his tutor advised him to put out an advertisement declaring his support for Establishments in Church and State. Bankes took the advice—and "polled more votes than Pitt in the days of his glory." So much for the corporate wisdom of universities.

It made him later a target in *The Times* for the Whiggish satire of Macaulay, in "A Country Clergyman's Trip to Cambridge";

A letter—and free—bring it here:
I have no correspondent who franks.
No! Yes! Can it be? Why, my dear,
'Tis our glorious, our Protestant Bankes.

"Dear Sir, as I know your desire
That the Church should receive due protection,
I humbly presume to inquire
Your aid at the Cambridge election."

However, Bankes was unsuccessful at the election after: he was displaced by the son of the American painter, John Singleton Copley, on his way to becoming the reactionary Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst.

Bankes's social life is more interesting to us than his Tory political career. We catch glimpses of him in the Diary of Mrs Arbuthnot, with whom he was very friendly. The fame of his travels had preceded him, and she was pleased to meet one who had gone further into Egypt than "any European has ever been and has explored some of the most curious ruins in Thebes." His proud father gave a dinner-party, after which they went on to Lady Bessborough's to meet

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another traveller and pioneer of Egyptology, Belzoni. Next summer the Arbuthnots entertained Wellington and Bankes, when she found the latter excessively amusing with stories of his travels and his stay at Palmyra. Bankes was now proposing another journey to find the sources of the Nile and come back via the Cape; but she had a fear he might never return.

That autumn the obelisk arrived. At dinner with Vansittart, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Bankes explained that it was raised to record a remission of taxes under a Ptolemy. "We proposed to give this obelisk to Mr Vansittart as an instructive lesson; but Van said *No*, one to commemorate an *imposition* of taxes would be more in his way. . . ." Presently a group went with the Duke to see Bankes's collection of Egyptian curiosities. Next he is consulting the sympathetic Mrs Arbuthnot about an affair of the heart: he was much in love with Lady Buckinghamshire, very young and beautiful, who could not endure her husband and was even more desperately in love with Bankes. She wanted him to take her, disguised as a boy, off to Africa with him. (Shades of Lady Caroline Lamb, disguising herself as a page to get through to Byron! Actually, the best parts of Lady Caroline's novel, *Ada Reis*, the Oriental bits, were said to have been written by Bankes.) However, *this* temptation he managed to resist.

He poured into the ever sympathetic ear of Mrs Arbuthnot a good deal about Byron too. Talking to a very moral lady, he took a somewhat disagreeably moral line. Byron's funeral procession had passed the Arbuthnots' windows the day before. Perhaps Bankes had a point when he said that it was a motive of Byron to outdo other people, in wickedness as in other forms of *réclame*. When they were at College together, he had been almost the only person Byron was much attached to and Byron "used to confide all his iniquities to him. . . . Though he would not have trusted him with his own sister" (rightly as we know). William ended on a better note—"yet his genius, his enthusiasm and even his caprices rendered him so attractive that he could not help liking him."

THEIR AFFECTIONS went deeper than this, though there was no reason why he should tell Mrs Arbuthnot so. When Byron was dying, he sent a ring with a lock of his hair to William (this was kept at Kingston Lacy, until it was stolen). William could not have attended the funeral procession, since it was turned into a demonstration against the government by the Opposition. Such are the *désagréments* of politics.

Bankes himself made such a favourable impression on Mrs Arbuthnot that she went down to Cambridge to canvass for him, when her husband was committed to another candidate. On his success Bankes presented some rare and valuable Italian books to the university, and 100 guineas for the building of an observatory. (No memento for Cambridge from Byron!) A few years later she thought Bankes somewhat coarsened. A lion was supposed to roar at a dinner-party, but when William roared down Walter Scott she was displeased—perhaps he was a bit drunk. Samuel Rogers recorded that, though Sydney Smith was a brilliant talker, Bankes had overpowered him at his table by his superior facetiousness. But the ebullient M.P. met with a rebuff at the hands of the lower-class Buckingham. In 1822 Bankes had written an unfavourable review of Buckingham's book on his Palestine Travels in the *Quarterly*. William was convinced that Buckingham had made use of his drawings and notes in his popular work, and published a letter to Hobhouse saying so. On this Buckingham got £400 damages for libel, which seems an excessively large sum.

It is well known how cagey and cautious John Cam Hobhouse was about Byron and the goings on of his Cambridge circle; they had been pretty gay, but Hobhouse—the son of a Bristol Dissenting family—was qualifying to become the Victorian Lord Broughton. Indeed there is a point of general historical interest here, to watch the transition from the free-and-easy moral atmosphere of the Regency to the domestic life of the dear Queen. Hobhouse, in the six volumes of his *Recollections*, says nothing of their Cambridge days. It is Byron who recalled the great scholar and sot, Porson—of A. E. Housman's "In the hall of this college where Wordsworth was once drunk, and Porson once sober." "Of all the disgusting brutes, sulky, abusive and intolerable, Porson was the most bestial—the few times that I saw him . . . which were only at William Bankes's (the Nubian discoverer's) rooms." Byron on Cambridge again!

Hobhouse had been mainly responsible for the burning of Byron's Memoirs, a grievous loss to literature. He was glad enough to call in William Bankes to justify himself. In March 1825 at John Murray's,

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> "W. Bankes talked to me a great deal of Byron's regard for me. He approved of the destruction of the *Memoirs*, and said Byron's best friends could always recur to his poetry and conceal his life. That is my own opinion."

It was certainly Hobhouse's; we may doubt whether it was really Bankes's, though in his case there was a similar reason for concealment, or at least prudence.

Next year Bankes joined Hobhouse's Committee for the erection of the Byron Monument, along with a Trevanion to represent the family. In 1829 Bankes made an impressive speech on the Catholic Relief Bill, at length passed. Two years later he managed to adjourn the House, to stop a Dissolution of Parliament as a measure towards Reform; in the confusion and hysteria of the debate Hobhouse, a Whig Reformer, reported Bankes looking as if "his face would burst with blood." Even Peel, whose smile was like the silver plate on a coffin, stormed with anger: the Tories were on the way to being defeated. During these years, 1829–31, Bankes found a seat at Marlborough; from 1831–5 he was a county member for Dorset.

IN 1833 a *contretemps* supervened which would have ended any political career. But as a lady member of the family sensibly writes: "he was tried for an offence which in some countries is not considered a crime." On a hot night in June Bankes was on his way from dining at Lord Liverpool's to a late session of some importance at the House when he encountered a guardsman at the convenience which existed at the corner of the tower of St. Margaret's. We will not go into the infantile humbug of the proceedings, which took up a lot of eminent persons' time over an affair of infinitesimal importance—but merely note that a golden sovereign was transferred from the rich M.P.'s trousers to his waistcoat pocket. A host of prominent persons testified to the defendant's character—the old bachelor Rogers knew it to be irreproachable. William's father and brother gave evidence as to the long time it took him to make water. A cloud of grand witnesses somewhat befogged the proceedings—Lord Fitzroy Somerset, Earl Brownlow, Lord Burghersh, Lord Cowley, Dr Butler the Headmaster of Harrow, even a Regius Professor of History. The Duke of Wellington had known William for twenty years: he had come out to the Peninsular Army in 1812 and passed a good deal of time in the Duke's house. Wellington—who was free enough himself in sleeping around with women—regarded Bankes as "utterly incapable of such an offence."

After such a barrage both M.P. and guardsman were acquitted and "left the court without the least stain on their characters."

However, William did not put up for Parliament again. Two years later his father died; he inherited the beautiful house at Kingston Lacy, already wonderfully enriched with the art treasures he had gathered from abroad: and he was now free to embellish and improve to his heart's desire. He proceeded to carry out a remarkable achievement, for which he deserves to be remembered.

BANKES HAD BEGUN his career as collector in Spain in 1812 at the most favourable moment, when Wellington's victories were enabling the British to vie with the French in their acquisition of loot. Wellington himself captured Joseph Buonaparte's great coach-load of Spanish canvases. Young Bankes acquired a fine suit of Cordoba leather hangings to decorate a Spanish room at Kingston Lacy, which he gradually filled with fine pictures—the original sketch for Velasquez' *Las Meniñas*, a Borgia portrait, a Murillo (*Beggar Boys*), altar-pieces by Zurbaran and Ribalta; and later, Rubens' magnificent *Spinola* portraits. Two great Snyders pictures came from the Altamira palace in Madrid occupied by Napoleon and subsequently restored: William had prevailed on his father to purchase them; he himself bought a group of Cupids by Rubens and Snyders.

Then there were the Egyptian treasures: a fine sarcophagus of lilac-grey granite; many small objects that had caught his impassioned collector's eye—amulets, necklaces, scent-bottles of rare Egyptian blue, vessels that came from the dressing-tables of dead Queens like Nephertiti. The obelisk gave a great deal of trouble, for all its scholarly value. It had been set up under the Ptolemies; and it created much excitement among Egyptologists, for the Greek inscription aided the decipherment of hieroglyphics. But it had been damaged on its long journey. George IV, with his good taste, contributed some granite from Leptis Magna for its repair while it lay prone along the green English lawn. At last it was set up, on a site chosen by Wellington at the end of the gravel walk in front of the house, and he

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came to lay the foundation stone; at the other end were two magnificent bronze groups from Herculaneum.

Thus was Wellington's Britain, that had emerged the victor from the long struggle with France, embellishing herself after Waterloo.

AFTER RELINQUISHING the chores of politics, Bankes was free to go forward with the house. He called in Charles Barry, to turn it into an Italian palazzo. The ground was lowered on one side to make a new entrance, and a far grander staircase of white Carrara marble to carry up four flights was installed by Italian workmen. Painted ceilings from Italian palaces were set up in the rooms, busts and bronzes and urns decorated galleries and landings; life-size figures of Charles I, and ancestral Sir John and Lady Bankes, the heroic defender of Corfe Castle, were executed by Marochetti, whose work Bankes much admired. (He was successful in getting Wellington's statue at Glasgow commissioned by him.) Sir Roger Pratt's fine 17th-century house was encased in stone, and Barry restored the cupola.

In September 1840 William was able to report to the ageing Duke of Wellington: "I am among my works here, and am longing to have the opportunity next year of showing you what has been done. The house is not yet in a fit state for reception, but the few of those who knew it before who have looked it over, seem to admire it extremely, and to think that it will combine much comfort with a sufficiency of splendour."

Before William could receive the Duke, however, though with the work on the house essentially finished, another piece of infantility supervened and he had to go abroad "for the good of his country", as humbug used to have it. Charged in 1841 with a similar offence as in 1833, he wasn't going to face all that nonsense again, forfeited his ridiculously high recognisances (£5000) and went into exile. By some absurdity of the law he was apparently allowed to set foot on sacred English soil between sunrise and sunset on Sundays. So he would land from his yacht to deliver further treasures, the fruits of his real passion—collecting. His place was taken at Kingston Lacy by his respectable brother George, a boring lawyer, who now had to pay the bills. Fine painted ceilings descended on his unappreciative head. When he protested, a set of splendid Gobelin tapestries was sent elsewhere (to Soughton Hall instead, which became the property of the youngest brother, a chaplain-in-ordinary to Queen Victoria). He conscientiously forwarded to Kingston a unique set of enamels, of Elizabeth I and her Court, painted by Henry Bone.

IN VENICE William must have felt easier, with the Latin acceptance of things of the flesh for what they are—rather fun. And the siege of Venice in 1849 gave him a splendid opportunity for further acquisitions for Kingston Lacy. In 1851 another consignment arrived on poor George, now a Privy Councillor and what-not. For the state-bedroom at home William had acquired panels for the ceiling which are "excessively beautiful. Three of them are by Paul Veronese, one by Padovanino, and eight arabesques by John of Udine, which were purchased as part of that lovely ceiling from which came the centre panel by Giorgione on the staircase. It was the accident of my being here all the siege that enabled me to pick up all these fine things, since nobody had a farthing—anything might be had for money." Still later he removed an entire ceiling from the Ca'd'Oro—designed by Sansovino, painted by Pordenone and Veronese—for the Spanish room at home.

Lucky William! Buying the things he really loved to the last, he died in Venice in 1855; and Parliament, of which he had once been a promising member, gave special permission for him to be buried, in the aura of sanctity, in the family vault in Wimborne Minster.

We may well wonder whether his was not a more satisfactory life, with an altogether more creative achievement, than that of so many who crowded within the walls a stone's throw away from the convenience at St Margaret's, Westminster.

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Frank Gibney

The Japanese & their Language

Letter from Tokyo

Commodore Perry was reminded that Japanese did not act with the same rapidity as Americans did, which was thus illustrated: Should several Japanese meet together, desiring to visit the American ships, one would say: "It is a beautiful morning." To which another would add, "How pleasant it is!" Then a third would remark, "There is not then a wave to be seen upon the water." At length a fourth would suggest, "Come let us go and see the ships."

NEW YORK DAILY NEWS (13 June, 1854)

THE JAPANESE and the Americans share honours as the world's worst linguists. Both nationalities stand out as such, even among neighbours with similar linguistic backgrounds and problems. The classic British traveller, with his stubbornly Anglicised French or German, will be able to make his wishes clear in a remote Alpine inn while the American is still politely fumbling in his Berlitz phrase book. The visiting Korean or Chinese student at Harvard or Columbia will be talking to American friends at parties in workable English, while his Japanese colleague is sitting up late with his dictionary, trying to figure out what the professor said in a lecture he heard two days before.

Yet the Japanese and the American both worry about language problems a great deal. They start out from premises (or prejudices) which one might think would make communication between them easy. The Japanese, as the inheritor of one of the world's most confusing languages, tends to write off any foreigner's efforts to learn Japanese as basically impossible educationally—and, indeed, something of a danger socially. Just as most Japanese families oppose marriages with foreigners, few really enjoy having foreigners master their language. The better they speak it, the more intrusive they seem to the Japanese subconscious. This is partly because Japanese, with its many grades of polite and familiar expression, is such a personal, indeed intimate language. It is also partly because every Japanese knows his language is very difficult. He is aware from folklore if not from experience how easily foreigners can make mistakes. He is resigned, therefore, to the necessity of using a foreign language himself when communicating with non-Japanese. Few Japanese would argue with the statement of the Yale historian, John W. Hall, that "Japan is the only truly world power which does not have a 'world language'. . . . In many ways Japan remains the most culturally distinct and intellectually inaccessible of the great powers and this fact impedes greatly the exchange of ideas and sentiments with the rest of the world."

THE REASONS WHY Japanese and Americans so often are inept in foreign languages are completely different. The American failure is due largely to lack of incentive. Because so many people in the world, for better or worse, speak English, he feels a minimum need to learn a foreign language. When he does, he can do well. Americans have the advantage of some of the world's most scientifically planned language courses and a tradition of leadership in linguistics scholarship dating from modern pioneers in linguistics like Edward Sapir and Leonard Bloomfield. Yet for all of this, the number of Americans who really learn foreign languages remains small. When we do, out of instinct, background, and availability, we generally turn to French, Spanish, German, or another of the European tongues. The American, however, remains conscious of the problem. He is apt to enunciate loudly and clearly when speaking English to foreigners, for instance.

The Japanese, on the contrary, have every need and incentive to learn a foreign language. And, for the great majority, English is it. They study it relentlessly. They have been studying it ever since the dawn of the Meiji days, when English replaced Dutch as Japan's basic means of communication

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with the outside world—much to the consternation of Japan's diligent Dutch scholars.[1] By 1859, Fukuzawa Yukichi could write in his autobiography, "as certain as day, English was to be the universal language of the future." The Japanese militarists banned the study of English during World War II. But after the post-War US Occupation began, it was resumed with ever increasing intensity.

AMERICAN RATHER THAN BRITISH English is and will remain Japan's basic channel of communication with foreigners. British and Australian accents are generally next to incomprehensible to Japanese speakers of English. In 1975, the private English-language schools, institutes, courses, and tutoring services can be numbered in the thousands, not to mention the normal heavy dosages of English given in schools and universities. English is a required language in middle school, the Japanese equivalent of junior high. The English-language teaching industry in Japan, in fact, is a business with estimated sales of half a billion dollars annually—schools, institutes, tutors, books, records, home cassette study guides, and all.

Yet the results of all this energy and zeal are not impressive. Ironically, in a country where the English-language sign over a shop or on an advertisement has the kind of cachet that French glosses like *Bon Ton Cleaners*, *La Maisonette*, or *Chez Louise* used to have in the United States, the reading knowledge of English is relatively poor. And Japanese do badly, on the whole, at English conversation. They are characteristically hypersensitive about making mistakes in public, calling undue attention to themselves, or committing themselves prematurely to a position which may be wrong. All three of these national characteristics are deadly handicaps to anyone trying to learn a foreign language.

THE PROBLEM OF COMMUNICATING is made really awesome by the differences between English and Japanese. As a matter of basic linguistic structure, Japanese is related to no modern language, except Korean, which it resembles strikingly. But even with Korean, the resemblances date very far back. There is almost no common ground to begin with as there is, say, for an American studying French or German.

Borrowed words are another matter. The Japanese borrowed words extensively from China and adapted the Chinese writing system to their own needs. There the similarity stops. Grammar, word order, and likely as not, the meanings of words and phrases taken from Chinese originally are totally different, not to mention the Japanese alphabet-type *kana* syllabary, which the Chinese do not possess. As far as a true understanding of the language goes, a Chinese trying to figure out Japanese has about the same relative advantage that a late-Empire Roman would have in learning German or Polish.

English and Japanese are in many ways polar opposites. The Japanese do not care about the same things in language that Westerners are taught to care about. The structure of the phrase does not count so much as the manner in which the words are directed. Japanese is an "I and Thou" language. Its purpose is to establish a feeling of communication between two or more people, and in so doing it employs marvellous subtleties to express their relationship. For example, although pronouns are sparingly used in Japanese, there are ten different ways to say "I" or "we", depending on the degree of politeness one wishes or is compelled to use. Verb forms are subtly varied for the same reason: to denote the speaker's rank and relationship to the person spoken to.

YET UNDERLYING ALL THE NICETIES of phrase and the tens of thousands of sophisticated Chinese-borrowed compounds, the basic structure of the language is astonishingly primitive. The distinctions between verb and noun, for example, are not strong. Tenses are not clearly defined. Adjectives can be inflected like verbs and relative clauses can be vague to the point (for a Westerner) of absurdity. There are no relative pronouns in Japanese; the action is simply pressed adjectivally in front of the subject.

English grammar is rich in classifications and distinctions; it can be precisely analysed. Not so Japanese, although since the 18th century Japanese grammarians have tried hard to do so. Words are thrown into the conversation in a seemingly heedless confusion of nominatives, predicates, and modifiers. Japanese gives far less consideration than most developed languages to syntactical or logical distinctions, as the Western mind understands them. There are neither definite or indefinite articles, for example. A noun can be either singular or plural. The distinction between present and future tense is often elusive—not to mention past and past imperfect. The possessive

[1] Dutch was used because of the small, but secure monopoly which the Dutch trading post in Nagasaki held on Japan's official contacts with the outside world, during two centuries of Tokugawa seclusion. Through their tiny window on the West, at Deshima in Nagasaki Harbour, a few Dutch books, notably dictionaries and technical works, found their way into Japan. Until the mid-nineteenth century, a Japanese almost had to learn Dutch if he wanted to read a book on modern engineering or history or philosophy. More than a century before the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the *Rangakusha*, scholars who learned Dutch, had begun to introduce Western learning into Japan. They took their name from the Japanese word for Dutch (*Oranda*).

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can be irritatingly vague; for instance, *kashu no shiriai* is translated either as "an acquaintance of the singer" or "an acquaintance who is a singer." It is up to the listener to sort it all out, depending on his relationship to the speaker and the context and intensity of their conversation.

Japanese is not confined in a tight-fitting, Aristotelian grammar, as English is. As a language it is rooted in the here and now. It is interested in moods, rather than judgments. It is concerned more with sensibilities than sense. When you use English, you are using a language that constantly makes logical value judgments and invites value judgments to be made in turn. In Japanese, on the contrary, you have a language that is shy of making logical, legal, or philosophical judgments. Japanese did not possess an adequate verb "to be", for example. Concepts like being and reality had to be artificially made up of Chinese-borrowed compounds at the time of the Meiji Restoration. Even the word for "concept" (*gainen*) had to be artificially formulated.[2]

On the other hand, Japanese has a wealth of distinctions in purely concrete matters. Take the question of numerical classifiers. Weak though it may be in singulars and plurals, Japanese has a multitude of words to express enumerations of different kinds of concrete objectives. *Ni* or *Futatsu* means "two"; but two animals are *nihiki*, two birds are *niwa*; two rifles, *nicho*; two drinks, *nihai*; two stones, *niko*; two boxes, *futahako*; two cigars, *nihon*, and so on.

SOCIAL JUDGMENTS AND INFERENCES are always important. When Mr Nakamura says to Mr Shirai, "*Shirai-kun, sono ken ni tsuite, Aoki-san ni sodan shite ano mondai o umaku shori shite kure* (Shirai, talk with Mr Aoki about that matter and take care of the problem nicely, please)", the Japanese may not be too specific about who is to handle the problem and what problem or problems are to be handled. The language is extremely precise, however, about the authority relationship between the speaker and the other two persons involved.

Of course, sentences like "the sky is blue" or "the man walked across the street" can be translated quite literally from one language to the other, even though basic things like word order are different; for instance, "*ano otoko* (the man) *wa* (denotes subject) *michi* (street) *o* (denotes object) *koemashita* (crossed)." After that, however, things begin to get difficult. Should you translate "*Matsumoto san ga sono teian o yoku kangaete itadakitai desu*" literally as "I'd like Mr Matsumoto to reflect on his proposal"? Or, given the situation and the word usage, should you translate it more accurately into our thought patterns as, "I think Matsumoto is dead wrong and he'd better come up with another idea." On the other side of the ledger, how does Mr Matsumoto himself translate simply a legalistic English sentence like "I'd like to know the precise degree of liability which each of the accused was aware that he had incurred"? Japanese lawyers do not have an easy life.

AS ONE OF THE FOREMOST INTERPRETERS of Japanese and English, the scholar and TV-radio commentator Kunihiro Masao, put it, "English is a language intended strictly for communication. Japanese is primarily interested in feeling out the other person's mood, in order to work out one's own course of action based on one's impression." Frequently the Japanese use language itself to convince someone of the ease or difficulty of an action or a problem. Whether the language is Japanese or English matters little in this case.

For example, not so long ago, a Japanese businessman working for a foreign company in Tokyo produced a series of incomprehensible English-language memoranda about a particular problem. His foreign superior read them and said, "I'm sorry, but I don't understand anything in these memos."

The Japanese smiled with relief, "I am glad you don't understand them. I don't know how this problem can be solved, and I hoped to convey this feeling to you by writing this kind of memo."

Where English is a good language for categorising and decision-making, Japanese does better with protracted discussion. A classic case of the contrast was an ambiguous translation during the 1970 discussions between Premier Sato Eisaku of Japan and President Richard Nixon, at San Clemente, California, in their notably unsuccessful attempt to settle the issue of large Japanese textile exports to the United States. When Nixon explained his problems with the textile imports (which had been offending many of his political supporters in the American South), Sato answered, "*zensho shimasu*", a phrase literally translated as "I'll handle it as well as I can." To Nixon this meant, "I'll take care of it", that is, Sato would settle the problem and find some way to curtail the exports. To Sato, however, it was merely a polite way of ending the conversation. Of course, he would not handle the problem badly. But it was simple politeness to use a nice, forward-looking phrase like *zensho*. To Premier Sato, or any Japanese, this meant only that he would think about the situation and try to cope with it in as graceful a way as possible, without necessarily making any decision.

[2] In his book on prose writing, *Ronbun no Kakikata*, the Japanese sociologist Shimizu Ikutaro makes this and other interesting observations about the difficulty of adjusting Japanese to modern usage.

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FEW OTHER NATIONS HAVE SUFFERED SO many serious diplomatic problems over the translation of words. Much has been written about the confusion caused during the last-minute negotiations between the State Department and the Japanese envoys in Washington just prior to Pearl Harbour, because Ambassador Nomura Kichisaburo probably misinterpreted the diplomatic politeness of Cordell Hull (the American version of *zensho*, one might say) as a genuine offer to negotiate further. A war later, at the end of July 1945, what slight chance remained of averting the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (and the subsequent Soviet entry into the War) was ruined when the Japanese news agency Domei mistranslated a keyword, *mokusatsu*, in Premier Suzuki Kantaro's reply to the Potsdam Declaration as "reject" instead of "ignore."

The slightest shift in a Chinese character can change meanings radically. The original Japanese translation for the U.S. containment policy toward the Soviet Union in 1947, for example, was *sekitome* ("checking, stemming"), which correctly interpreted what, at least, started as a defence policy of reaction against Soviet aggrandisement in Europe. Later, Japanese newspaper editors, pushed by their "progressive" reporters, quietly changed the word to *fujikomi*, which has more the meaning of "trapping" or "confining." In the same way, the word used by *Asahi Shimbun* editorialists for the U.S. military intervention in Cambodia, *shinnyu*, meaning "invasion", had a far harsher meaning than a similar word (also pronounced *shinnyu*, but meaning "advance into") when used to describe the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

English has a clear distinction between affirmatives and negatives. English speakers tend to express themselves in declarative, flat statements which, according to the rules of the English language, should be either accepted or contradicted. Japanese, on the contrary, shuns flat commitments and dotes on multiple negatives. A Japanese response to a question rarely is either 100% acceptance or 100% contradiction. He prefers to examine the proposition discussed and suggest various approaches that could be made to it.

"It isn't that we can't do it this way," one Japanese will say.

"Of course," replies his companion, "we couldn't deny that it would be impossible to say that it couldn't be done."

"But unless we can say that it can't be done," his friend adds, "it would be impossible not to admit that we couldn't avoid doing it."

Such a conversation, oddly enough, can be reproduced in Japanese with ease and naturalness. It may even result in a positive course of action.

JAPANESE HABITUALLY understates. English habitually overstates. The comparison of a small Japanese thirty-one-syllable poem with one of Shelley's or Walt Whitman's or, for that matter, one of Robert Lowell's or Allen Ginsberg's is informative. In a more prosaic situation, a Japanese lady will ask politely, "Do you think the decorator's taste really suits this house?" She actually means, "What awful taste—can you really stand having him on the job one more instant?" A Japanese, when entertaining a guest to dinner, says, "Please forgive the poor quality —it's really nothing at all." He does not mean that. It is just by way of putting oneself in a humbled position from which the Japanese expects to be rescued by his conversational partner. "No, no, what a magnificent meal!"

American English, of course, has its own kinds of eccentricity and overstatement. I remember a genial old Russian gentleman who worked for an American news magazine and spent his spare time collecting American speech foibles. When I left once for a trip, I said, "I'll be seeing you." He stopped me with a mischievous smile and said, "When an American says, 'I'll be seeing you,' he really means 'I'll not be seeing you,' doesn't he?" The thought had not previously occurred to me.

The American use of polite hyperbole is lavished on any situation, but always rather casually. ("What a present—you shouldn't have done it.") Japanese hyperbole is ritualistically designed to make the other party feel good and to diminish one's own part in the proceedings, even though the real intention may be far different. In fact, *ingin burei* ("polite rudeness"), a Japanese word in considerable currency, denotes the extensive habit of using very honorific language to put someone down or to insult him. The honorific complexities of the Japanese language are such as to discourage the Japanese themselves, who are condemned to live from cradle to grave within a framework of verbal pretence and affectation. Thanks to the long-established codes of etiquette, there are fixed forms of polite circumlocution for even the simplest of functions.[3]

[3] It was inevitable that the Japanese take the various American circumlocutions for toilet, for example, and run them down the drain. The basic words for toilet, like the Chinese *benjo*, and the Japanese *go-fujo*, (literally "the unclean place") are now frowned on in polite society, as their counterparts are in the United States. Most Japanese now use the English adaptation *toire*, or the native *otearai* ("washroom"). Sophisticated places like Tokyo's Hotel Okura now label the men's rooms *"Shinshi no kesho shitsu"* (literally "gentlemen's powder room").

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LETTER-WRITING REMAINS Victorian in its conventions. A reminder to pay a bill or an announcement that a new man has joined a bank's board of directors are equal occasions for the obligatory opening remarks about the rude necessity of imposing on one's time or the change of seasons. "Now that spring promises to come," the letter begins, "the first buds of the cherry blossoms can be descried climbing the far-off mountain. Although we hesitate to break in on your very busy schedule, troubled as you are with many worthy pursuits, it is time that necessity compels us to remind you that your firm's indebtedness. . . ."

Many small companies still consciously employ one man as a letter-writer. In one firm I knew of, the letter-writer was an ageing gentleman nominally in charge of the personnel section, whose practical use to the organisation in this function had long since been evaluated as counterproductive. Yet he was the only person out of some two hundred who had the necessary background to write one of those polite letters in which, given the vagaries of Japanese society, the slightest slip of grammar could lose the company several prestige points. Mr Imamura was also a master at handling complaints and apologies. Most Japanese groups contain within them an apologiser, useful for occasions when a soft, well-spoken answer can turn away a lot of wrath. Since Imamura's company sold household appliances, through the agency of some one thousand fast-talking salesmen, the old man often had some very angry customers to soothe. He rarely failed. Bathed in the polite polysyllables of Imamura's gentle phrases, relaxed by the utterly ambiguous wanderings of his honorifics, refreshed by the flattering balm of his concern for the other party's health, living arrangements, and future familial prosperity, the most irate complainant would generally go away happy, his order uncancelled.

FOR ALL OF ITS COMPLICATIONS, Japanese is one of the world's richest, fastest changing, and intellectually stimulating languages. Starting out as a primitive island tongue with some still unproved suggestions of Malay-Polynesian antecedents, it is classed with Korean as a member of the Altaic family. First through Korea and then directly, the Japanese borrowed wholesale from China over a period of at least five centuries, much as the raw European tribes of the early Christian era borrowed and then swallowed up the vocabulary, along with scraps of the stored knowledge, of ancient Greece and Rome. Just as Latin came into the European languages, almost inseparable from the Christian religion and Greek philosophy, the Chinese language came to Japan along with Buddhist theology and the Confucian way of life.

Yet it is too facile to equate the Japanese use of Chinese with the English reliance on Latin. Even the parallels are far from exact. Albeit removed on its island, English grew up surrounded by diverse European influences. The Saxons imposed their language on the Romanised Celts and in turn took admixtures of Danish and German, and, after the conquest, heavy dosages of Norman French, which already owed much to Latin itself. The directly borrowed words of Latin and Greek origin had several layers of precedent to build on.

No one imposed anything from without on Japan. There were no parallels to either Anglo-Saxon invasions or Norman conquest, not to mention anything like a Roman occupation. The first Japanese scholars realised themselves that their rough, if complicated, language was inadequate to express the subtleties of the newly imported Buddhism or to describe the cultural niceties of the visiting Chinese and Korean artisans. Above all, they had no native system of writing; so they adopted the letters and the learning of a highly sophisticated Chinese language, dialects, characters, and all, which was structurally poles apart from their own.

TO ACCOMMODATE CHINESE to their own language structure, the Japanese developed two parallel *kana* syllabaries which now express some fifty-one sounds and which serve as a phonetic alphabet. (The exact number varies, typically, depending on whether some old forms are used or not.) For the English analogy to be valid, one would have to imagine the native Celts, still unable to express themselves in Runic script, suddenly embracing an importation of Latin and Greek lexicons in manuscript, hundreds of Church Latin psalters, and the works of the Athenian dramatists in Attic Greek. Nor was there any Norman army to enforce conformance to a new language.

Such borrowings from the Chinese took place at different times in Japanese literary history. The first waves of major borrowing had been incorporated in the structure of the language by the time the great 10th-century collection of poetry, the *Manyoshu,* was written; its imagery reflects the subtle cultivation of T'ang Dynasty Chinese civilisation. In the early 11th-century novels of Murasaki Shikibu and Sei Shonagon it is used to the full. The last great borrowing from the Chinese was made, purely for convenience's sake, at the time of the Meiji Restoration, when words for modern devices like the telephone (*denwa*) were manufactured—*den* ("lightning" or "electricity") plus *wa* ("talk")—from Chinese character roots in the same way that Europeans devised their modern scientific

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terms (like telephone) from manufactured Latin and Greek.

Chinese is not, however, the only source which the Japanese language has drawn on. Portuguese and Latin words arrived with the 16th-century missionaries. Some of them are still current, like *bateru* from *padre* for old-time priest and *tempura*, the now famous batter-fried fish and vegetable dish, from *tempuro* ("seasoning"). The Dutch left behind words like *biiru* ("beer"), *koppu* from the Dutch *kop* ("glass") and *buriki* from *blik*, meaning a sheet tin roof. Student and medical vocabularies still show marks of 19th-century German. *Arubeito* from *Arbeit* is used everywhere for a part-time student worker and *Karute* from *Karte* for a patient's record in a hospital. But from the pre-Meiji days to the present, it is English that predominates; since the Occupation, American English exclusively. *Restoran* ("restaurant"); *infure* ("inflation"); *torankii* ("tranquilliser"); *besu appu* ("base-up", "salary raise"); *midoru* ("middle management"); *doraibu in* ("drive-in"); *hisuterii* ("violently neurotic")—the borrowings from English wend their way through every section of Japanese life. And their number increases.

CHINESE, OF COURSE, has a more organic relationship. The sophisticated Chinese compounds and the native Japanese idiom have lived for almost fifteen centuries within the same house. Combined and distilled, as by the poets or in the great novels of more recent times, they can express subtleties of thought and meaning which have no parallel in any Western language since ancient Greek, in which the use of grammatical particles, not dissimilar to those in Japanese, could convey extraordinary shadings of expression. Reading the works of Mishima, for example, who loved difficult characters and richly archaic turns of phrase, is a little like taking on Theocritus in the original.

But listen instead to a couple of Japanese friends describing what went on at a party the night before and the language becomes almost violently primitive, laced with onomatopoeic phrases, defying translation; like the conversation of Marine Corps sergeants with its heavy supportive use of pungent Anglo-Saxon words. This reversion to a more primitive expression is partly a necessary supplement to a language which relies so much on the visual symbol for its meaning. As Sir George Sansom wrote in his *Historical Grammar of Japanese*, "The ideograph itself is so tersely expressive that its users are apt to rely on the visual appeal of symbols rather than the aural appeal of words."

THERE IS BASICALLY SOMETHING very different about seeing a language in terms of pictures and seeing a language in terms of lines. The European languages are linear and intended essentially to move from one idea to another as quickly as possible. They are simply used as vehicles for conveying ideas which exist independently of them. Asian ideograph, or picture, languages are not like this. The picture itself means a great deal. When you are trained to think in terms of pictures, when you have grown up to speak in terms of drawing rather than conceptualising, you are less interested in exactitudes and more interested in flourishes. You are less interested, so to speak, in how quickly a line goes from point to point; but more interested in how well it is drawn.

In the spring of 1946, swimming high on the tide of optimism that characterised the early days of the U.S. Occupation, an Education Mission, twenty-seven strong, arrived in Tokyo from the U.S. The American educators in the mission were genuinely shocked at the vast amount of time given over to the study and practice of Chinese characters in the Japanese schools. One of their first recommendations in the school democratisation programme was to substitute the Roman alphabet for the characters:

> It is recommended that some form of *Romaji* be brought into common use . . . bringing about a more democratic form of the spoken language. . . . The need for a simple and efficient means of written communication is well recognised and the time for taking this momentous step is perhaps more favourable now than it will be for many years to come.

Needless to say, this well-meaning effort never got off the ground. The Japanese language is so rooted in homophones, it is hard to see how any way other than a system of codified picture writing could maintain the distinctions. Consider, for example, the following meanings of the word *senko*, as found in Kenkyusha's *Japanese-English Dictionary*, which I offer without further comment:

senko n. (E)ō remote antiquity; all ages. 2
senkō eternity. . . .
senkō n. (E) one's deceased (=late or lamented)
senkō n. a dyer; a dye-works hand.
senkō n. a shipwright; a ship-carpenter.
senkō n. a joss stick; an incense rod. . . .
senkō n. a flash; a glint; . . .
senkō n. military merit (=exploits). . . .
senkō n. special (=exclusive) study research; . . .
senkō n. (L) 1 [ ][travelling in disguise. . . .
senkō n. submarine voyage; nagivation under. . . .
senkō n. selection; evaluation. . . .
senkō n. choice; selection; screening. . . .
senkō n. [ ] polarization; optical rotation. . . .
senkō n. (L) -suru v. go barefoot. . . .
senkō n.[ ] batting first. . . .
senkō n. concentration (=dressing, . . .
senkō n. ore washing. . . .
senkō n. scarlet.

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senkō n. perforation; boring; punching; rupture. . . .
senkō n. pig iron. . . .
senkō n. preceding; going first; walking ahead of. . . .

The only way to keep one's sanity in this kind of situation is to visualise in terms of ideographs. The process is undeniably cumbersome, which explains why so many sophisticated Japanese, in the course of daily conversation, are constantly drawing characters in the palm of their hands, to explain to fellow-Japanese what they mean.

ALTHOUGH SOME JAPANESE DICTIONARIES of Chinese characters have listed more than 40,000, in actual practice the number of characters known to a Japanese college graduate is about 5,000 (and growing fewer every day, too, thanks to relaxed standards). Even encyclopaedias think in terms of no more than 10,000 characters. In 1946, the Education Ministry prepared a list of 1,850 basic Chinese characters which should be thought essential. (Most proper names and place names were not included, however.) Of these 1,850, exactly 881 are to be learned in the first six years of schooling. This was probably as close to a reform of the cumbersome written language as the Japanese will ever come.

The younger generation is predictably not so strong in its knowledge of characters as its elders. Recent tests showed, however, that even complicated characters, as long as they were shown regularly on television, had a wide degree of comprehensibility. Another result of television, not wholly injurious, has been to standardise yet further the pronunciation of the national language. This standardisation process has been going on since the educational reforms of the Meiji Restoration. Despite the complications of its written language, spoken Japanese is probably the most dialect-free major language in the world. Although the older people, especially in the north and in the extreme south, still speak with local *namari* (dialects), the standard Tokyo pronunciation is stamped on the country far more extensively than is the standard English in either Britain or the United States. The insular commitment of most Japanese to this principle is reinforced by their stern sense of the fitness of things.

FOREIGNERS ARE NOT EXPECTED to speak or understand this complicated language. Even the best Japanese, if spoken by a foreigner, produces something akin to shock in its hearers. Travelling in the country, I have often stopped a farmer or a workman and asked directions like, "If we take the next right turn and then go left, can we get to Matsumoto?" The farmer will look at me uncomprehendingly, say instinctively in Japanese, "No, you have to take the second left, after you cross the railway," then add with a hand waving across his face to denote total bewilderment, "Engu rishi no spee ku."

The phenomenon is not limited to the countryside. Not long ago, I went to buy some tickets to a James Bond film at one of Tokyo's downtown movie palaces. I noticed a sign in Japanese saying that there were unreserved seats only in the first few rows, so I asked if any of them were still available. The girl at the window froze and said nothing. When my wife, who was with me, repeated the same question in rather better Japanese, the girl remained mute. I just was not supposed to have been able to read the sign. I have had the same experience hundreds of times.

Admittedly, the fumbling efforts of foreigners to speak Japanese (including my own) are generally difficult to understand. Perhaps the caution of most Japanese in dealing with foreigners' Japanese is inevitable. But there is a certain amount of morbidity in the way they handle these attempts at communicating with them. Away from the small group of people-who-know-him, the Japanese-speaking foreigner is apt to feel disembodied, not quite a piece of ectoplasm, but certainly not entitled to flesh-and-blood communication. Perhaps some special insignia, like a white star, should be given to those foreigners who can be certified as speaking intelligible Japanese. It could be carried on their suit jackets, as a warning.

MOST FOREIGNERS, OF COURSE, hardly try. A general apathy about learning the language of this host country is prevalent among foreigners resident in Japan. Americans are particular offenders, although the Europeans do not do much better.

In the early Occupation days, when I first came to Japan, there existed, thanks to the accidents of war, a fairly sizeable group of Americans who knew something of the Japanese language and were not bashful about practising it. One might have predicted that the several thousand Americans trained in Japanese by the army and navy during World War II would have continued to develop this language and impart some curiosity about what they had learned to those at home. Develop it they did, and thereby produced a rather remarkable generation of Japanese scholars, with some diplomats and businessmen as well; but few others followed them. I have yet to notice any conspicuous upsurge of younger Japanese scholars to take the place of our wartime generation, although of late there has been a slight increase. There are probably less than one

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thousand Americans who can handle the Japanese language, written and spoken, as a working tool. There are less than one hundred Americans who could write passable Japanese prose.

I lived with the American community in Tokyo first in 1945 and 1946 as a Navy officer, later in 1949–50 as a journalist. Then I went away. When I came again to live there in 1966, I was surprised to find that the proportion of Americans who are proficient in or even vaguely aware of Japanese seemed to have shrunk.

The average American who comes to Japan to live is at first disposed to give the language a try. He begins either by going to one of the crash courses for a month or two ("after eight weeks of excruciating toil, you, too, can speak . . .") or by hiring a tutor who will come to the office at specified times. It sounds simple and appealing: Just forty-five minutes three or four times a week and you will soon know what all those people around you are talking about. By about the third or fourth month, generally, discouragement sets in. It is fuelled by the comradely consensus of one's peer group at the American Club, the Press Club, the Keyaki Grill at the Hilton, or whatever extraterritorial oasis one frequents, that "the language is just too damn hard."

"I'll tell you, Harry, I have this teacher and I have been trying these phrases, but I can't make head or tail of it. It's all 'mooshie mooshie' to me."

"Fred, when you try to use it, they don't understand you anyway. Besides, my boy Fuji, in the office, speaks damn good English. He tells me it's really bad manners to try using the language, because it doesn't look good for the boss to make mistakes."

"You know, George, that's a point. I hadn't thought of that."

"What the hell, fella, as long as we know enough for the bath-house?"

And so it goes. Similar exchanges occur between resident American women after the Thursday morning ladies' doubles at the tennis club, at the meeting to plan the annual Print Show of the College Women's Association, or *sotto voce* at the various social clubs which keep the foreigners' wives out of trouble, cutting up paper and watching flower arrangement.

After the four-month drop-out, the language is rarely tried again. Perhaps when the businessman is reassigned after his first two-year term, he starts to think he'd better give it a second try. But then he shrugs and joins what has come to be known as consensus number two: "Well, of course, it's too late. If I'd known I was going to be here for five years at first, I would have worked on it, but after all, Mr Nakamura speaks English better than I do."

THE EXTENT TO WHICH FOREIGNERS in Japan are thus the prisoners of Japanese interpreters can hardly be understated. On occasion, the interpreter is skilled enough in both languages, as well as in the study of human nature, to do his job most effectively. A Canadian sales manager of my acquaintance was wont to tongue-lash his Japanese employees when they failed to deliver their order quotas. Face purple and arms flailing, he would begin, "You are stoopid. Stoopid, I tell you. How you people call yourselves salesmen I donno. You don't know the first thing about sales. You've paid no attention to anything I've been saying. I'm surprised that you can all stand there and dare to look me in the face with your lousy records. Now what do you plan to do about it?"

As rendered into Japanese by his resourceful interpreter, who was a salesman himself, this exhortation came out somewhat as follows: "While I have the highest regard for your basic abilities. I would not be completely honest if I did not permit myself to express my disappointment at your recent performance. Despite your fine efforts, the final results were far less than we had hoped for. You should now reflect on your performance."

The effect was the same. The salesmen were quite aware that they had done badly. The apoplectic countenance of their foreign leader was its own explanation. Indeed, the translation was quite accurate, given the differences in style between the two civilisations. For the interpreter to have translated literally would have involved a real loss of face for all concerned—the sales manager for losing control of himself, the salesmen for having been thus publicly insulted, as well as the interpreter for being the vehicle of such intemperate communication.

There are, however, relatively few interpreters possessed of such gifts. Most do a fairly good job of translating the gist of what is being said, with special attention given, in business conversations, to numbers and figures. But most non-professional Japanese speakers of English, often with long residence abroad and years of study behind them, cannot even do that. The outstanding exceptions to this rule, in business and politics as well as among the academics, are few and overworked.

EVEN WHEN THEY USE ENGLISH A LOT, most Japanese assume a special kind of frozen personality when they speak it. They tend to stick to certain areas with which they are familiar, like the businessman who can talk fluently only about his golf handicap and the length of time his visitors plan to stay in Japan, or the hostess who greets foreign businessmen at *Le Rat Mort*, the

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expensive Ginza cabaret, with "How are you? You have trouble with dollar shock?" It is most dangerous to assume a general knowledge of English by a Japanese, unless he or she has been thoroughly tested. A man fluent in banking terms can no more discuss literature than the English-speaking hotel waiter can discuss banking. An engineer may have all the vocabulary needed to talk about turbines, but will not understand an English-language film or news broadcast.

Context and connotation pose fearful problems when going from one language to the other. Picking up a recently published dictionary of famous sayings, I noticed the entry under Wellington. The translator had picked up the Duke's memorable phrase, "The Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton." To an American or European this conveys a world of meaning. How often has the phrase been used to justify the class system and the whole British ideal of the well-born generalist, always in control of the situation. The Japanese translator, however, simply gave a literal rendition: "The cause of victory at Waterloo was the education given by Eton Middle School." He added an explanation that Eton was famous because of its students' learning and their enthusiasm for sports.

This mistake was obviously an honest one, but all too typical. Spoken English is especially hard for the Japanese, because of its directness. The typical Japanese conversation goes around in circles, widening or narrowing depending on the interest of the participants. The central topics to be discussed are repeated over and over again, like a fugue. Not so English, where all too much depends on the single sentence, the sharp question, or the unitary paragraph. One misunderstood clause can result in total incomprehension.

In his recent book, *Understanding and Misunderstanding*, Nishiyama Sen (a former U.S. Embassy official who has probably interpreted more important conferences, business and diplomatic, than almost anyone in Japan) paints an unforgettable picture of the English-speaking Japanese who nods his head in assent at what the other party is saying, expresses his own statement in excellent English, but misunderstands the principal point of the conversation. This happens more often than anyone cares to admit. The resultant requests for confirmation from the interpreter ("Didn't he want some changes in the draft?" "No, he really didn't." "Hadn't we better ask him again and confirm it?") not only sidetrack the conversation, but generally give the foreign party an unwarranted impression that his Japanese opposite numbers are dumb, sly, or stalling. ("Hell, fella, Shimazu speaks English as well as I do. He *must* have understood what we were saying.")

TO AVOID SUCH MISUNDERSTANDINGS, it has become the fashion lately to run some of the innumerable Japanese-American symposiums or seminars with simultaneous interpretation. This has the advantage of glamour and neatness. Everybody feels comfortable with his adjustable earphone tucked next to the water pitcher and often develops an illusion that a real exchange of views is taking place, just as in the United Nations. While not denigrating the abilities of the Japanese simultaneous interpreters, some of whom display something akin to genius at their art, I have myself rarely found this to be successful. For the translator of Japanese, as Nishiyama puts it, must not merely transmit information, but must literally "re-express" the thought. Translating from English to French, for example, one has merely a problem of retailoring the thought to suit the other language, like altering a suit of clothes. Going from English to Japanese, or *vice versa*, you need to unravel the material and start weaving all over again. This can take time. Unless the interpreter is very skilled indeed, the principals in Japanese-American dialogues end up in the position of two people looking at each other around a corner, back in the mirror room at the fun house.

ALTHOUGH I HAVE AN ample vocabulary, my own Japanese has drastic limitations. At its best, I speak a Japanese version of broken Shakespearean English (thanks partly to my having swallowed Sir George Sansom's *Historical Grammar of Japanese* whole, at an early stage of my Japanese education). At its worst, my Japanese sounds like the fluent, but incomprehensible, English of a Hungarian movie director who has spent twenty years in Hollywood without taking an English lesson. Despite these handicaps, I have always preferred to do business in Japan in Japanese. While a good interpreter can tell me almost 85% of what is said, his very presence diminishes my chance of finding out how the Japanese I am talking to feels and what he might be thinking. Given the nature of the Japanese language, this means losing contact with him at the very beginning.

Just a little bit of language helps. I used to try pointing this out to foreign friends, urging them to keep up their studies in Japanese, particularly the written characters, without which the language is a jumble of words, all sounding alike. Over the years my efforts have been generally unavailing. "Sure, I tried studying it," says the fellow shaking his dice cup in the club's stag bar, "but it's impossible. We're only going to be here for a year more—and where can you use Japanese after you leave. . . ?"

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Alistair Elliot

A Farangi Broadens His Mind: Autumn: A.H. 1345

"He that travels in the Highlands may easily saturate his soul with intelligence, if he will acquiesce in the first account."
SAMUEL JOHNSON. *Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland*

First the landscape was green, with pigeon towers,
like windmills without sails, hidden in trees
in the shallow vale (no river could be seen),
and the road ran among fields of bright young
wheat.
Not a bad road, but soon it turned from black
to the same brown as everything in sight,
not boring brown but shades of buff and grey,
old battlefields of botany, rock, and drought:
not a desert—the driver doesn't pause
to pray for safety in this merely waterless place.

Occasional man on a camel in the distance.

After an hour of delicately scanning
these miles of absent lake in powder form
I had to explain myself across the aisle
in shouts, to a teacher who couldn't understand
travelling for pleasure. So we gave up that,
and I asked about the little roadside cairns:
what could these pyramids of twenty stones
signify? He was full of explanations:
They put them up to mark the road. "But, please,
excuse me, we can see the road already."
It's for the winter, when because of rain
the road's a river. "But can't they see the river?"
The snow conceals it all. "The stones too, no?

And still the road being lower" (using hands)
"than what it goes through shows itself far better
than a few stones."
Then (as I'd long been hoping)
we passed a man kneeling in the great plain
to make a cairn, his folded coat beside him.
"Look, what's he doing?" *Who? I did not see.*
In the evening light I couldn't make him see
the dusty dwindling peasant.
Far from home
at nightfall people heap up stones for nothing.

Then through the window, as he stared at me,
I saw two people praying with the sun

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lengthening shadows down the orange slope,
their coats beside them: and they faced two cairns.

"Look, it's a guide for praying towards Mecca!"
Again he missed them. And polite as ever,
The Holy City is another way
and nobody needed stones to pray toward it—
disgraceful thought! We didn't speak again:
outsiders are not serious human beings.
How could they understand or behave well?
No wonder they have to travel to learn wisdom.

Getting off, I bowed, my hand across my heart.
Hastily he did too. *And God protect.*

Robert Conquest

I Know Not Where

Perhaps the best moment is when,
His hand at the curve of her back,
She comes in to their first kiss
Like the bending of a bow.

—Near the height the old bowmen
Would draw that fathom of yew
Too. Lithe, hard, supple.
Arching, giving. . . . But no,

Wait a minute, how can
That be right? The string
Is what the archer pulls
Towards him, and the bow

Curves the wrong way. Reason,
The organising hand, eye,
Must delete the false start.
—In another sense, though,

It's too late! The greenwood in turn
Generates woman: Marion.
Then taut Athene, Penthesileia. . . .
Images run on, winds blow

On, blow on, blow on, green
Leaves scatter till through stripped
Dryad limbs sight bursts into
Such stars! The Pleiades, Virgo. . . .

—In fact as a background scene
The whole phenomenal
Universe! But at a strange
Angle, by a strange glow,

Where even the flicker of an
Imperfect imagery seems
Itself a Light of the World,
An arrow of getting to know.

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THEATRE

Christ as Man & Horse

By John Weightman

CATCHING UP WITH EVENTS at the Old Vic, I have just been to see *Grand Manoeuvres* and *Equus*, both of which I missed when they first came on. A. E. Ellis's play about the Dreyfus Affair was given fairly rough treatment by most of the critics; Peter Shaffer's exploration of sex and religious feeling has, on the contrary, been one of the National Theatre's great critical and public successes, and has recently opened triumphantly in New York. It is not my intention to propose an original assessment of the two plays, modifying their order of merit. *Equus* strikes me as being by far the better piece of stage-craft, whereas *Grand Manoeuvres* is a pointlessly busy production, frequently straining for effects that are probably not worth achieving. Quite frankly, I think *Equus* is to some extent a good play, while *Grand Manoeuvres* is almost entirely a bad one. But what I found most interesting was that both works present the theme of suffering, and invite us openly and almost didactically to have certain attitudes towards it. Since I found myself refusing to have these attitudes, I have had to try to work out why.

In both plays, there is a sacrificial victim. In *Grand Manoeuvres*, this is, of course, Dreyfus himself, whose long martyrdom is shown as the passion of a Jewish scapegoat, who suffers through the sins of society as a whole. In *Equus*, it is a deranged boy, who is being treated by a psychiatrist after blinding some horses. An essential point, however, is that he has sensed the presence of a kind of equine deity in the horses and, in piercing their eyes with a sharp instrument, he has, as it were, crucified his God in a moment of stress and, by implication, killed off the better part of himself. When his obsessions are released by a psychodrama, we are given to understand that, in his case, the loss of his anguish is a diminution, even a deprivation. So, one play seems to be saying: "Suffering is an effect of gratuitous human cruelty, and anti-Semitism recreates the Christ-figure in various contexts", while the other implies: "The real poetic interest in life lies in suffering, which we eliminate too easily on rationalistic grounds." However, it would be wrong, I think, to conclude from this that Mr Ellis is a simple anti-dolorist, whereas Mr Shaffer's dolorism is at once avowed and clear-sighted. In the attitudes towards evil and suffering in both plays there may be something dubious which militates against their being taken seriously as dramatic literature.

IT IS NOT IMMEDIATELY OBVIOUS why Mr Ellis should have chosen to write a play about Dreyfus at this juncture. As far as I know, nothing fresh has come to light recently about the Dreyfus Affair, an extremely complicated *cause célèbre*, which continued in various phases over many years and involved an enormous cast of participants and partisans, some of whom changed sides as the argument proceeded. How could the innumerable facts of so involved a story be adequately represented in a stage-play lasting three hours? The answer is that they cannot; they have to be drastically simplified. But a dramatic simplification of a known sequence of historical events is only justified if it brings out some incontrovertible truth in a proper aesthetic balance, or presents some new insight. Mr Ellis fulfils neither of these conditions.

What he gives us at the centre of the play is a powerful presentation of Dreyfus's suffering. We see him unjustly accused by his bullying superiors, publicly degraded after his unfair conviction, exposed to appalling physical and mental cruelty on Devil's Island and attending the second, public trial as a dignified but prematurely aged man. Our hearts bleed for him, as they should. This is more or less his own account, as he gives it in *Cinq années de ma vie* (1901), with impressive composure and a more scrupulous regard for detail than is shown in the play. For instance—contrary to what the play might lead one to conclude—he states that the writings he composed during his captivity were not destroyed, but were restored to him on demand after his

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release. How, indeed, could they have been quoted in the play, if the play were accurate in showing their destruction?

The historical Dreyfus may have been rather less appealing in certain respects than Mr Ellis's character. Some people found him prickly and unattractive. But he was undoubtedly a hero, sustained, strangely enough, by his sense of honour as an officer and his unshakable French patriotism. It is one of the weird ironies of fate that so convinced a Frenchman should have been accused of treason as a Jew. If I remember rightly, he never once mentions his Jewish origin nor refers to the Jewish question in any way. It was the insult to his honour and his patriotism which kept him going and, for instance, made him take the admirable decision to initiate no conversation with his jailers during the long years of his captivity. Although there may be something Talmudic in his constant emphasis on legality, he appears, mercifully, to have had no sense of being a Jewish scapegoat.

Mr Ellis turns him into one by transforming the Legion of Honour, which is eventually bestowed upon him by the President of the Republic, into the Star of David. This is justifiable to the extent that Dreyfus was *objectively* a Jewish scapegoat, although he was unaware of the fact, or more probably chose to disregard it, and might indeed have objected to Mr Ellis's insistence on it. Certainly, he would have wanted all the details relating to Cavaignac, Picquart, and Bertulus to be exactly right, whereas the play takes certain misleading liberties with them. The Army behaved badly enough, in all conscience; but Mr Ellis blackens it still further, as Dreyfus would no doubt have pointed out. In fact, Mr Ellis goes so far as to highlight Dreyfus's suffering by arranging things so that he, at least among the major characters, is the only fully sentient human being on the stage. Since Mr Ellis has chosen to use the fashionable mode of dramatic caricature for the bulk of the play, all Dreyfus's persecutors are presented as sadistic buffoons; they strut and posture, and even dance to comic music. Colonel Henry's death is incomprehensible, Esterhazy and Du Paty de Clam are grotesques, and General Mercier is a villain from a melodrama. But if "wicked" people are dehumanised in this manner, they cannot be taken seriously as moral beings. There is no point in feeling indignant about their behaviour; and the spectacle of Dreyfus's suffering, instead of providing a moral stimulus, becomes a mere accident of the universe. Or, to put it the other way round (in terms of religious mythology), on this showing, Dreyfus is a secular parody of Christ; he is a being of a unique kind, sacrificed for inscrutable reasons by God, through the agency of men who are no better than animals. Even the Dreyfusards are made to look ridiculous in the parliamentary and social scenes, as if the great moral debate which divided France for years had no worthwhile content. *Grand Manoeuvres* (the French expression *grandes manoeuvres* means "spring or summer manoeuvres") must be meant—but one wonders why—as a generally ironical title; all the manoeuvres are petty.

THE QUESTION IS a delicate one, and I feel I may not be expressing myself very tactfully. What I am trying to say, I think, is that the play, consciously or unconsciously, exploits anti-Semitism as an obvious source of pathos, without taking any pains at all to show how it fitted into the social pathology of the France of the day, which was not necessarily the same as the social pathology of the Germany of the 1930s. Yet surely, when evil and suffering are the result of collective aberration, accuracy of fact and tone is an indispensable form of intellectual and artistic hygiene. Besides, not to be accurate is to show a certain disrespect for the truth of the suffering.

PETER SHAFFER, too, as he explains in a programme note, started from a historical fact: a stable-boy actually did blind the horses in the stables where he worked. But since nothing more is known than the bare anecdote, Mr Shaffer was free to invent an explanation, and he has done so very ingeniously. His play is basically a suspense thriller in the form of an illustrated dialogue between the psychiatrist and the boy, admirably played by Michael Jason and Dai Bradley; the latter, in particular, brings a splendid intensity to his part.

We gradually learn that the boy has been brought up by a religious mother and an atheistic, literal-minded father. He has inherited his mother's religious temperament in an acute form, and from early childhood he is fascinated by a picture of the scourging of Christ, which he buys with his pocket-money and hangs at the foot of his bed. His father objects to this picture, just as he objects to Bible-reading and watching television, which he sees as similar forms of emotional indulgence. In fact, the father, a master-printer, thinks of himself as an upholder of artisan rectitude, and has no patience with the poetic confusions of life.

In a traumatic, pre-pubertal incident, the boy is given a ride on a horse by a stranger, and this establishes a link between his nascent sexuality, his religious feeling and horses. The picture of Christ is replaced by a picture of a horse, looking outwards with Christ-like eyes. The boy composes pseudo-biblical litanies with which to worship this horse. He becomes obsessed with horses in

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general, and attributes to them the ambiguity of Christ. They are god-like in their strength, but they allow themselves to be chained and scourged by men; inside all horses' eyes is the same equine Godhead. The obsession becomes so strong that the boy gets a job in some stables, where he can elaborate and complete his ritual. Once every three weeks, he takes a horse out in the middle of the night, strips naked, puts a stick between his teeth as a "man-bit", and rides round and round the field until he achieves orgasmic climax, i.e. *ejaculatio sacra*, or ecstatic communion with the God-beast. This ceremony makes an exciting piece of theatre, since the horses are excellently simulated by stalwart young men wearing chromium-wire heads and chromium *cothurni* as hooves.

The climax ends the first section, and at that point I guessed what the solution was going to be. The buxom blonde stable-girl is out to seduce our hero, in the nicest possible way; but when she gets him naked in the straw, he panics because of the sacrilegious need to transfer the ejaculation from the divine to the human, under the accusing gaze of many-eyed Equus. He picks up the legendary tool for removing stones from horses' hooves and stabs out all the eyes. This gives another fine frenzy when the scene is re-enacted as psychodrama.

ALL THIS SOUNDS plausible enough. Although I am myself much too like the atheistic father for divine bestiality ever to occur spontaneously to me, the play made the possibility of it convincing. Here was a new and interesting example of the way sex can get mixed up with religion, or *vice versa*. But I was more and more astonished by the psychiatrist's running commentary or soliloquy, as he led the boy through the various stages towards self-understanding. He constantly established comparisons between himself and the boy, to his own disadvantage. He confessed he had a humdrum, non-sexual marriage, because he and his prosaic Scottish wife lived side by side without communion: she involved in her knitting and he fascinated by the primitiveness of Greek legends, with their centaurs and dionysiac revels. What good was his work, he asked, if his therapeutic efforts merely served to relieve young people of the particular pain which gave them their interesting identity? Now that he had "cured" this boy, what would the future hold for the ex-centaur who had known ecstasy in a Hampshire field? He would grow up into a drab, uncultured adult, whose only contact with the equine God would be to put a bet of 50p from time to time on "the gee-gees."

This part left me totally unconvinced, although it came over strongly as the author's point of view, since the female magistrate who countered it slightly was not allowed to develop any really cogent arguments. There is no necessity within the play for the psychiatrist to have a non-sexual, non-lyrical marriage; his maladjustment and self-pity are simply a device to produce an artificial contrast. While there may be no great harm, and possibly some temporary lyrical gain, in a boy masturbating on horseback with the impression that he is entering into communion with the equine divine, this is clearly a deviation he will have to grow out of if he is to enter the world of adult sexuality. It is distressing, rather than awesomely beautiful, that he should have blinded several horses through getting his instinct in a twist. In any case, is he a true centaur, or might there not be some other, more complex, explanation of the Greek mythical image? And is it likely that so intense and sensitive a boy will have nothing left when he has lost his illusions? And if certain aspects of myth or religion, whether Christian or pagan, do not survive full understanding, are we to be so sentimental as to cling to them, and to argue that muddled suffering is better than lucid vision? I hardly think so. If we are ever again, in any sense, to

> *Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;*
> *Or hear old Triton sound his wreathèd horn. . . .*

we shall have to be as rigorous in our way as the Greeks were in theirs.

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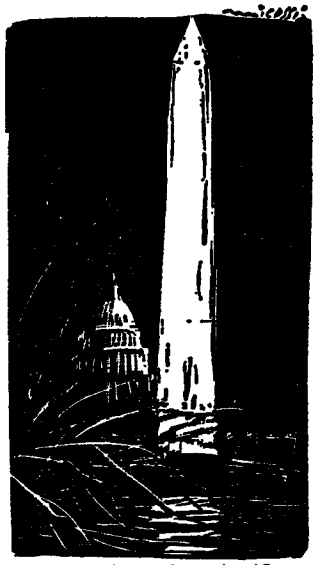
AMERICAN CHRONICLE

Travellers' Tales

By Max Beloff



BY THE TIME the United States comes to commemorate in 1976 the second centenary of the Declaration of Independence we shall presumably know whether the historical forces that have impelled Britain into membership of the European Economic Community have prevailed over the attempt to retrace our steps; though we shall not know as soon as that what significance in the longer view our entry would have.[1] It will certainly be a moment for looking again at what may well come to seem to have been two centuries of a peculiarly intimate relationship between separate sovereign states—a relationship unlikely to be reproduced in relations between the United States and other possible political partners, including even a "United Europe" itself.

Historians and analysts of the international scene have already begun again to try to look at the wider aspects of the New World's relations with the Old. Indeed they have always been torn between attaching primary importance to this aspect of the matter and emphasising the specifically English or British side of it. One can ask—as do the contributors to the recent *Lessons from America*[2]—what we have learned or could learn from the transatlantic example, both in the sense of conscious imitation and in its more philosophical Tocquevillian aspect. That is to say, does the United States prefigure inevitably what all Industrial Societies are likely to come to? Is it the global model to which everything points? Yet at the same time it is possible for a major American historian to devote what must have been a long labour of love to anthologising what American citizens have observed not in Europe as a whole but specifically in Britain which was for so much of the period their most important country of pilgrimage whether in search of business, education, culture, social life, or mere frivolity.[3] And the work is the more useful in that the author's antecedents are not British and his unspoken assumptions (and prejudices) are purely American, though he knows England much more intimately than most of our visiting academics. Yet even Professor Commager can nod. Barristers "take silk"; they do not "take the silk." Nor have they traditionally—things are different now—read law as undergraduates.

WE ARE, OF COURSE, confronted with a problem which is in its essence insoluble. For one thing we cannot approach it with an open mind. Our own personal reactions are liable to alter with every contact we make. Visiting the United States three times during 1974 after a gap of seven years, and after being told how depressing I should find the atmosphere, I found it on the contrary more exhilarating than I had remembered; and a refreshing contrast to things at home. It may, of course, be that I was influenced by the fact that my purpose in coming to the United States—to elicit support for a new and unconventional (in British terms) academic institution—the (independent) University College at Buckingham—made me aware of how open Americans still are to new ideas and new ventures; and that this was a tonic after my confrontations with the ingrained conservatism and rigidity of British institutions.

Even more important is the fact that the literature itself—and, nowadays, films and television—pre-empts our sensibilities. America is partly real and partly myth—and the mythology sometimes accents what we have in common, sometimes our differences.[4] And similarly most Americans have come to these shores with certain expectations and have inevitably looked for evidence with which to confirm them. The experience is one in which no *tabula rasa* exists or could exist.

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[1] There are useful documents illustrating the impact of the decline of British power upon Anglo-American relations in *Anglo-American Relations since the Second World War*. Edited by IAN S. MCDONALD. David & Charles, £5.50.

[2] *Lessons from America*. Edited by RICHARD ROSE. Macmillan, £4.95.

[3] *Britain through American Eyes*. Edited by HENRY STEELE COMMAGER. Bodley Head, £5.

[4] The point is well made in Professor Marcus Cunliffe's contribution to the *Lessons from America* symposium: "New World: Old World—the Historical Antithesis."

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All this is true of relations between America and Europe generally as well as of the peculiar Anglo-American relationship. But there is something much more difficult that is involved when we try to assess the so-called special relationship. The United States is after all the product of a successful movement among colonists primarily of British stock—a movement which brought them reluctantly and after much hesitation to demand and fight for total independence. As John Dickinson put it: "Torn from the body, to which we are united by religion, liberty, laws, affections, relation, language and commerce, we must bleed at every vein. . . ."

But as an historian of the Bernard Bailyn school is likely to emphasise, the movement itself is only comprehensible in terms of the American's inheritance from a particular tradition within English political thought. Yet this tradition was put to new and revolutionary uses, and culminated not merely in independence but in a "republican" form of government—making no place for the prescriptive power or influence of a monarchy or aristocracy—which never made a great appeal in England itself. It is possible to show that independence was sought, in part, because of the failure of the English Whiggism to carry through a radical revolution in the mother country and also, significantly, that the colonial radicals were from the beginning not concerned merely with America and the British Isles but with "freedom" everywhere—even in Corsica and Turkish Georgia. America's self-conscious role as a revolutionary power precedes the birth of the nation itself.[5]

IT WILL NOT DO, however, to accept without question what appears to be Henry Steele Commager's answer to the question and to say that "the break of Anglo-Americans with the Mother Country was political, while the rupture of European Americans with their mother countries was cultural as well as political"; this is to take too abstract a view of what politics is about. If separate institutions and different institutions were created by the Americans it was because their social structure and the cultural values associated with it demanded a change.

But as soon as one says this one hastens to qualify the judgment. For it is the case that Americans of non-British stock had to give up their language in the first or second generation for all but limited purposes, and most often for all purposes; and that English was not only their medium of daily communication but their normal channel of access to the higher culture. For most of Professor Commager's American travellers, whatever their sentiments about Britain might be, their ability to enter into the life and thought of the country was very much greater than it was when they went to Germany or Italy or France. And it worked both ways. Because Americans could speak English they were accepted into British society in a way which was not easy for other visitors to emulate. "We are now", wrote Henry Adams to his brother in January 1863,

> "one of the known and acknowledged units of the London and English world, and though politics still place more or less barriers in our path, the majority of people receive us much as they would Englishmen, and seem to consider us as such. I have been much struck by the way in which they affect to distinguish between us and 'foreigners', that is people who don't speak English."

And it remains the case that even today if one of my colleagues said he had met "a foreigner in the quad" one would be very surprised to discover he meant an American.

IT IS, OF COURSE, TRUE that the language spoken and written in the United States has come to differ from what is normal in Britain—that is to say except in circles where the American impact makes itself felt there too. It would not be difficult, ENCOUNTER's "Amerenglish" experts notwithstanding, to distinguish by style alone the American contributions to Professor Rose's symposium from the British ones.[6] It does still make intercourse so much easier than that between Europeans and "Anglo-Saxons"—it was not for nothing that de Gaulle, a great master of his own language, liked this locution. And it is the more relevant in that in both the English-speaking countries the study of European languages and literatures has been on the decline (except where specialists are concerned).

In any event, what makes Professor Commager's anthology so illuminating and perhaps justifies (what some have criticised) the number of set-pieces by American visitors on their meetings with eminent figures in literature and the arts, is precisely the fact that the writers he

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[5] See *From Resistance to Revolution: Colonial Radicals and the Development of American Opposition to Britain, 1765–1776*. By PAULINE MAIER. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £4. This is a reflective and scholarly work though too close in form and style to the Ph.D thesis from which it sprang. Professor Maier must learn to wear her learning more lightly.

[6] In the notes on contributors to Professor Rose's volume, he coyly remarks of himself that he "acquired a speaking and written knowledge of English at Oxford" where he was a post-graduate student. Reading his contributions to this volume, one is tempted to say that this was too late in life; they are clearly written in "American." Has anyone looked from this point of view at the style of that even more distinguished immigrant son of St Louis, Mr T. S. Eliot?

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draws from could talk freely with their hosts and read what was being published, and were not wholly dependent upon visual impressions; though these were often so powerful as to dominate their reactions and later reflections particularly when the contrast with their normal environment—rural or urban—was acute.

Professor Commager was faced, as is any anthologist, with the problem of arrangement and decided upon a grouping by decades. It has served him well. It is only by looking at the thing chronologically that we can both get the shock of recognition where the permanent features of England are concerned and savour the full irony where there have been major changes. The core of the work relates to the mid-19th century, the high Victorian noon when most American stereotypes were fixed for good. But many of their observations seem strange in a Britain where the loss of economic ascendancy has been accompanied by a loss of the habits and values through which it was achieved.

> "Personally, the English do not attract nor shine; but collectively they are a race to make their mark on the destinies of mankind.
>
> "In the first place they are eminently *industrious*. I have seen no country in which the proportion of idlers is smaller. I think American labor is more efficient, day to day or hour to hour, than British: but we have a larger proportion of non-producers—petty clerks in the small towns, men who live by their wits, loungers about bar-rooms etc. There is here a small class of wealthy idlers (not embracing nearly *all* the wealthy, nor of the Aristocracy, by any means), and a more numerous class of idle paupers or criminals; but Work is the general rule, and the idlers constitute but a small proportion of the whole population. Great Britain is full of wealth, not entirely but mainly because her people are constantly producing." (*Horace Greeley*, 1851)

Tell that to the Hudson Institute. . . .

GIVEN BRITAIN'S GENUINE pre-eminence in that world, what Greeley called their "exorbitant and unparalleled" self-complacency or self-conceit is understandable. It was not only English conceit about material achievements that Greeley noted:

> "They cannot even consent to go to Heaven on a road common to other nations, but must seek admission through a private gate of their own stoutly maintaining that their local Church is the very one founded by the Apostles, and that all others are more or less apostate or schismatic. . . ."

It was this quality which enabled them to judge others (even half-a-century later) by their own standards which Americans not unnaturally found disconcerting:

> "A thing that one feels more and more irritatingly in England is that, while with other foreigners we stand on common ground, where we may be as unlike them as we choose, with the English we always stand on English ground where we can differ only at our peril and to our disadvantage. A person speaking English and bearing an English name, had better be English, for if he cannot it shows, it proves, that there is something wrong in him." (*William Dean Howells*)

THE COUNTERPART for the admiration, if sometimes reluctantly extorted, for Britain's material achievements was an extreme sensitivity to the hardships of British workers in country and town alike, and in particular to the squalor of the cities. It is not enough to say that for many of the visitors the implicit comparisons they were making were not of like with like, that they were coming from a country to which the industrial landscape came late and in which there had (prior to the coming of modern industrialism) been no great conglomerations of people at all. Misery and luxury juxtaposed in London and Liverpool certainly—how would these American visitors have reacted to Naples or to Paris? Nor was it enough to throw back in the teeth of the visitors the condition of the Negro slave as a makeweight to the condition of the village labourer in England. These tragedies were real. But what the visitors tell us little about is what was done to ameliorate these conditions—and indeed the meliorist emergence of a welfare state does not provide a natural framework for travellers' tales.

WHAT IS OF COURSE IMPORTANT, if daunting, is that while the United States also has had to face the social consequences of urbanisation, it does not appear to have faced them more successfully than Britain. Indeed in some respects it has done rather less well. One of the American contributors to Professor Rose's book—Mr Hugh Heclo of the Brookings Institution—suggests indeed that the grip of the individualist ethic has been too strong to enable the United States to develop a successful and well-articulated programme of state intervention: "An American citizen in need can be less sure than his British counterpart of the timeliness, amount or conditions of publicly organised aid." And as a Great Depression descends upon the world once more this may turn out to be important. But what is perhaps even more disquieting is the fact that the Americans, with greater resources, have not discovered notionally how to deal with the primary poverty that persists in the most advanced of modern industrial societies. "Society", writes Mr Heclo, "appears much more intractable than most of the anti-poverty warriors of the 1960s supposed."

It is particularly true that the idea that education could furnish the way out of the poverty trap has failed to prove itself. Dr Alan Little's study of compensatory education programmes with particular reference to race relations bears out Mr

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Heclo's scepticism. And what is true of education would seem likewise true of the other panacea, "community development", although Mr Nicholas Deakin's essay, aptly entitled "On some perils of imitation", ends on a rather more optimistic note. In these areas, while America and Europe may face common problems as a result of common experiences, the idea of America as "model" seems much less appropriate than in the field of consumer preferences and middle-class life-styles to which it is more commonly applied.

DOES THE AMERICAN FAILURE in this respect—the discovery of an area in which the "neat engineering solution" seems not to work—require some important change in the American view of the old world in general and Britain in particular? To judge by Professor Commager's selection of extracts and introduction, the answer must be: not yet. It is clear that he himself echoes the most constant feature of the American descriptions of Britain: the ubiquity, solidity, and importance of the class structure; and that he finds it hard to accept the idea that any American could find this anything but a blot on the country. Among the exceptional visitors who did not find the English class system "both a puzzle and an affront" he includes Walter Hines Page, the American ambassador during the first World War who "somehow persuaded himself that a class society was an element of strength in a nation." But how is one to know that it is not?

Clearly, the American version of classlessness or "equality" in the Tocquevillian sense has not made possible a solution of grievous domestic problems—economic, social, racial. It is an open question as to whether America is better served by its leadership in its new world position than was Britain by its governing classes and their institutions in her great days. There *may* be functional advantages—perhaps psychological advantages—in a class system and in the institutions, social and educational, that perpetuate it, that American social philosophy does not take sufficiently into account. In the extract that Professor Commager gives from a description of Cambridge around 1860, William Everett remarks of the English Universities:

> "they are not places of popular education, they are not means for diffusing education among the people, but they are the head-quarters of polite literature and exact science, and the great training schools for the governing classes. . . ."

And this, he adds,

> "is so felt throughout England, that a farmer, or a country attorney, or a doctor in a small town feels that by sending his son to college he will give him a rank among his fellow-citizens he never could have had without, and give the name a new lustre that will go far to accomplishing the Englishman's dearest wish, the founding of a family."

One could well ask whether a society in which ambitions were of this kind did not also produce a greater sense of obligation to the community at large and greater talents for rule than are likely to be displayed by the alumni of the democratised and "Americanised" Universities which the last British generation has seen fit to create? With all their bigotry and apathy in some important respects, were Oxford and Cambridge not better univeristies while they performed this function of social promotion that the egalitarians would regard as not only unnecessary but positively noxious?

Professor Commager does not himself ask these questions but that is not to say that his authors do not occasionally provoke them.

> "An Englishman [writes Emerson, no uncritical admirer of things English] shows no mercy to those below him in the social scale, as he looks for none from those above him; any forbearance from his superiors surprises him, and they suffer in his good opinion. But the feudal system can be seen with less pain on large historical grounds. . . . So now we say that the right measures of England are the men it bred; that it has yielded more able men in five hundred years than any other nation. . . . The American system is more democratic, more humane; yet the American people do not yield better or more able men, or more inventions, or books or benefits than the English. Congress is not wiser or better than Parliament."

If the American perspective were right, England in becoming more democratic, more humane, in being no longer concerned with ruling an empire should also be a more stable, happy, and harmonious nation. Is there any evidence for this being true? Is not England, even where basic social reforms are concerned, still living on the inheritance of Victorian high-mindedness? Do not our surviving reasons for pride relate also to that inheritance? Lord Reith's tastes may not be everyone's, but (as Mr John Whale suggests in his essay on "Public Broadcasting Policy") the Reithian notion of the B.B.C.'s task produced a better service than the unalloyed commercialism of North American radio and television. One may admire, reverence, even love America, and yet not feel that its influence as critic or model has been all to the good.

PROFESSOR COMMAGER'S BOOK therefore leaves one with a sense of sadness. It recaptures through an interesting series of visions an England that is no more—for he does not take us beyond 1948. What the decline of England could and

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would mean was something that sensitive Americans foresaw. As George Santayana put it in a famous passage:

> "Never since the heroic days of Greece has the world had such a sweet, just and boyish master. It will be a black day for the human race when scientific blackguards, conspirators, churls and fanatics manage to supplant him."

Santayana was thinking, of course, of alternative claimants to world rule—the Germans, the Russians. He was unable to contemplate a future in which England itself would produce "the scientific blackguards, conspirators, churls and fanatics", still less one in which the workings of universal suffrage (another American gift) would see them elected to high public office.

The other side of the coin

The world that spins through space may be a sphere;
But this world of alternate light and shade
In which we try to live is like a coin,
Flat and recumbent, lying where it's laid,

And falling "heads" or "tails" when it is spun;
A shape to which the third dimension
Means almost nothing, and for which the fourth
Means keeping one side up towards the sun.

Inspect the coin; on one side you will see
God's profile—stern, remote; on the other side
Not, as you might suppose, some bumptious devil,
But nymphs and satyrs with no shame or pride.

Those facets—irreconcilable, looking out
On opposite vistas—are, for all their strife,
One being; not on speaking terms, and yet
Inseparable and close as man and wife.

While lovers drag each other down to earth,
The anchorite earns a halo, thrashing sin;
But if no sin were there to be thrashed out,
What grace, what decoration would he win?

And as the coin wears thinner, we can see
Right through it sometimes; watch those champions join
Their palms in puzzled harmony, at last
Grasping what's on the other side of the coin.

Edward Lowbury

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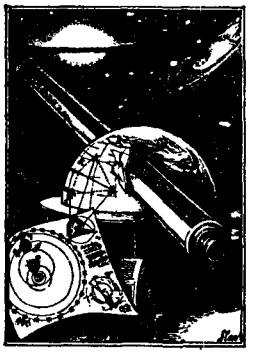
SCIENCE

The Great Tradition

End of an Epoch?—By WERNER HEISENBERG



WHEN WE CELEBRATED the five hundredth birthday of Copernicus (1473–1973), we believed that our present science is connected with his work, that the direction which he had chosen for his research in astronomy still determines to some extent the scientific work of our time. We are convinced that our present problems, methods, and scientific concepts, are at least partly, the result of a scientific tradition which accompanies or leads the way of science through the centuries. It is, therefore, natural to ask to what extent our present work is determined or influenced by tradition. Are the *problems* in which we are engaged freely chosen according to our interest or inclination, or are they given to us by an historical process? To what extent can we select our scientific *methods* according to our purpose, to what extent do we again follow a given tradition? And, finally, how free are we in choosing the *concepts* for formulating our questions?

Any scientific work can only be defined by formulating the questions which we want to answer. But in order to formulate the questions we need concepts by which we hope to get hold of the phenomena. These concepts are usually taken from the past history of science; they already suggest a possible picture of the phenomena. But if we are going to enter into a new realm of phenomena, these concepts may act as a collection of prejudices, which hamper progress rather than foster it. Even then we have to use concepts and we can't help falling back on those given to us by tradition. I will, therefore, try to discuss the influence of tradition first in the selection of problems, then in scientific methods and, finally, in the use of concepts as tools for our work.

TO WHAT EXTENT ARE WE BOUND by tradition in the selection of our problems? When we look back into the history of science, we see that periods of intense activity alternate with long periods of inactivity. In ancient Greece the philosophers started asking questions of principle with respect to the phenomena in Nature. There had been a considerable practical knowledge long before. Great skill had been developed in building houses, cutting and moving big stones, constructing ships and so on. But it was only in the period after Pythagoras that this skill was supplemented by scientific inquiry. The relevance of mathematical relations in natural phenomena was discovered by Pythagoras and his pupils, and a great development in mathematics, in astronomy and in natural philosophy followed.

The decline of Greek science after the Hellenistic period, after Ptolemaeus had succeeded great astronomers like Tristarch or Hipparchus, marked the beginning of a long period of inactivity which lasted until the Renaissance in Italy. During this period of stagnation again an admirable development of practical knowledge led to a time of high civilisation in the Arab countries, but it was not accompanied by a corresponding development in science, or by a deeper understanding of Nature. More than a thousand years later, when Humanism and the Renaissance had shown the way to a more liberal trend of thought, when the explorers had demonstrated the possibility of expansion on our earth, a new activity in science was inaugurated by the discoveries of Copernicus, Galileo, and Kepler. This activity has lasted until our present time, and we do not know whether it will continue for long, or will give way to a new period in which the interest goes into very different directions.

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LOOKING BACK UPON HISTORY in this way, we see that we apparently have only a little freedom in the selection of our problems. We are bound up with the historical process; our lives are parts of this process; and our choice seems to be restricted to the decision whether or not we want to participate in a development that takes place in our time, with or without our efforts and contributions. Without such a favourable context, our activity would probably be lost. If Albert Einstein had lived in the 12th century, he would have had very little chance to become a good scientist. And even within a fruitful period the scientist has not much choice in selecting his problems. On the contrary, one may say that a fruitful period is characterised by the fact that the problems are given, that we need not invent them.

This seems to be true in art as well as in science. When in the 15th century the painters in the Netherlands discovered the possibility of portraying men as active members of their society, many gifted people were attracted by this possibility and competed in solving this given problem. In the 18th century Josef Haydn had tried in his string quartets to express those emotions that had become visible in the literature of his time (in the work of Rousseau and in Goethe's *Werther*); and then the musicians of the younger generation (Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert) gathered in Vienna to compete in the solution of this problem.

In our century the development of physics led Niels Bohr to the idea that Rutherford's experiments on *a*-rays, Planck's theory of radiation, and the facts of chemistry could be combined to a Theory of the Atom; and in the following years many young physicists went to Copenhagen in order to participate in the solution of this given problem. One cannot doubt that in the selection of problems tradition—the historical development—plays an essential rôle.

THIS MAY ALSO SOMETIMES BE TRUE in a negative sense. It can happen that traditional themes become exhausted and that the gifted people turn away from a field in which they no longer see any objectives for their activity. After Thomas Aquinas the philosophers wearied of the theological and philosophical problems of scholastics and turned to humanism. In our time the traditional themes of art seem to be exhausted. In recent years one of the most popular annual exhibitions of modern art in Germany, "*Dokumenta*" in the city of Kassel, has become a centre of political propaganda rather than of art, and on the outside of the exhibition building the young artists fixed a huge poster with the text: "ART IS SUPERFLUOUS." In a similar way we cannot exclude the possibility that after some time the themes of science and technology will be exhausted, that a younger generation will be tired of our rationalistic and pragmatic attitudes, and will turn their interest to an entirely different activity. In the present situation, however, many problems are still "*given*" in pure and in applied science. No effort is needed to invent them; and they will be passed on from the teachers to their pupils.

IN THIS CONNECTION IT IS IMPORTANT to emphasise the very great role of personal relations in the development of science or art. It need not only be the relation between teacher and pupil; it may simply be personal friendship or respect between people working towards the same goal. This is probably the most efficient instrument of tradition. Among the many examples which could be mentioned of this kind of tradition I will only recall some of the personal relations which have shaped the history of physics in the first half of our present century.

Albert Einstein was well acquainted with Max Planck; he corresponded with Arnold Sommerfeld about the theory of Relativity and about Quantum theory; he was a close friend of Max Born though he could never agree with him on the statistical interpretation of Quantum theory; and he discussed with Niels Bohr the philosophical implications of the relations of uncertainty. A large part of the scientific analysis of those extremely difficult problems, arising out of Relativity and Quantum theory, was actually carried out in conversations between those who took an active part in the research.

Sommerfeld's school in Munich was a centre of research in the early 1920s. Pauli, Wentzel, Laporte, Lenz and many others belonged to this group, and we discussed almost daily the difficulties and paradoxes in the interpretation of recent experiments. When Sommerfeld had received a letter from Einstein or Bohr, he read the important parts of the letter in our seminar and started at once a discussion on the critical problems. Niels Bohr maintained close connections with Lord Rutherford, Otto Hahn, and Lise Meitner; and he considered the continuous exchange of information between experiment and theory as a central task in the progress of physics.

The enormous influence of Niels Bohr on the development of physics in his time was not primarily due to his technical papers, but to his way of discussing over and over again with his partners the fundamental difficulties of Quantum theory—which, as he knew, did not allow for any easy solution. When wave mechanics was introduced by Erwin Schrödinger, Bohr saw at

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once that this was a very important new aspect of Quantum theory—but also that a simple replacement of the electronic orbits in the atom by three-dimensional matter waves could not solve the real difficulties. Again, the only way of analysing the problem seemed to be by personal discussion with the author. Schrödinger was invited to Copenhagen, and in two weeks of most intense discussion the way was prepared for the later development in the interpretation of Quantum theory, for Bohr's concept of "complementarity", and for the relations of "uncertainty."

I need not enlarge upon these examples. It is obvious that personal relations play a decisive rôle in the progress of science and in the selection of problems.

THERE ARE, OF COURSE, also other motives for the selection of problems which have played their rôle in the history of science. The best known of these motives is the practical applicability of science.

Already in ancient times interest in astronomy and mathematics was stimulated by the fact that knowledge in these fields was helpful for navigation and for the surveying of land. Navigation played a very important rôle in the 15th century when the explorers left Europe and the Mediterranean and went westwards. It is certainly no mere accident that Copernicus's discovery occurred shortly after the beginning of this period. When Galileo defended the ideas of Copernicus he made use of a newly-invented instrument, the telescope, thereby demonstrating that a practical tool could be helpful in the progress of science, and science could be helpful in leading to the invention of practical tools. Galileo and his followers were strongly interested in the practical side of science. They studied mechanical devices (*e.g.* the mechanical clock), and invented optical instruments. Newton constructed a bridge crossing the river Cam in Cambridge, and so on, It has always been part of scientific tradition, guiding the activity of many generations, that science should be applied to practical purposes and that the practical application should be a check on the validity of the results and a justification for the efforts in science. Therefore, the atomic physicists of the first half of our present century have merely followed this old tradition of science when they looked for practical applications of atomic physics. It was, of course, extremely disappointing for them that the first practical application was for warfare. Still, the fact that one now could transmute chemical elements into others in large quantities was justly considered a real triumph of science.

This interest in the practical application of science is frequently misunderstood as the trivial attempt of the scientist to acquire economic wealth, to "make money." It is true that this trivial material motive does sometimes play a rôle, depending of course on the individual concerned. But it should not be overestimated. There is another much stronger motive which fascinates the good scientist in connection with the practical application: namely, to see that it "works", to see that one has correctly understood Nature. I remember a conversation with Enrico Fermi after the War, a short time before the first Hydrogen Bomb was to be tested in the Pacific. We discussed this proposal, and I suggested that one should perhaps abstain from such a test considering the biological and political consequences. Fermi replied: "But it is such a beautiful experiment. . . ." This is probably the strongest motive behind the applications of science. The scientist needs confirmation from an impartial judge, from Nature herself, that he has understood her structure. And he wants to see the effect of his effort.

FROM THIS ATTITUDE one can also easily understand the motives which determine the line of research for the individual scientist. Such a line of research is usually based on some theoretical ideas, on conjectures concerning the interpretation of the known phenomena or hopes of finding new ones. But which ideas are accepted? Experience teaches that it is usually not the consistency, the clarity of ideas which make them acceptable. It is rather the hope that one can participate in their elaboration and verification. It is the drive of our own activity, the hope for results of our own efforts, which leads us on our way through science. This wish is stronger than our rational judgment about the merits of various theoretical ideas. In the early 1920s we knew that Nils Bohr's theory of the atom could not possibly be quite correct. But we guessed that it pointed in the right direction, and we hoped that we would be able some day to avoid the inconsistencies and replace Bohr's theory by a more satisfactory picture.

BUT THE RÔLE OF TRADITION in science is not restricted to the selection of problems. Tradition exerts its full influence in deeper layers of the scientific process where it is not so easily visible. And here I should first of all mention "scientific method."

In the scientific work of our present century we still follow essentially the method that had been discovered and developed by Copernicus and Galileo, and their successors in the 16th and 17th centuries. This method is sometimes misunderstood by terming it "empirical" science as

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contrasted to the "speculative" science of former centuries. Actually Galileo turned away from the traditional science of his time which was based on Aristotle, and took up the philosophical ideas of Plato. He replaced the descriptive science of Aristotle by the structural science of Plato. When he argued for "experience" he meant experience illuminated by mathematical constructs. Galileo, as well as Copernicus, had understood that by departing from immediate experience, by idealising experience, we may discover mathematical structures in phenomena, and thereby gain a new simplicity as a basis for a new understanding. Aristotle had correctly stated that light bodies fall more slowly than heavy bodies. Galileo claimed that all bodies fall with the same speed in empty space, and that their fall can be described by simple mathematical laws. Fall in empty space could not be observed accurately in his time—but Galileo's claim suggested new experiments. The new method did not aim at the description of what was visible, but rather at the design of experiments and the production of phenomena that one does not normally see, and at their calculation on the basis of mathematical theory.

Therefore, two features are essential for the new method. The attempt to design new and very accurate experiments which idealise and isolate experience and thereby actually create new phenomena; and the comparison of these phenomena with mathematical constructs, called natural laws. Before we discuss the validity of this method even in our present-day science, I should perhaps briefly discuss the basis of the confidence which led Copernicus and Galileo and Kepler on this new way.

Following a paper of C. F. von Weizsäcker I think we have to affirm that this basis was mainly theological. Galileo argued that Nature, "God's second book" (the first one being the Bible), is written in mathematical letters, and that we have to learn this alphabet if we want to read it. Kepler is even more explicit in his work about "world harmony." He affirms: God created the world in accordance with his ideas of creation. These ideas are the pure archetypal forms which Plato termed "ideas", and they can be understood by Man as mathematical constructs. They can be understood by Man because Man was created as the spiritual image of God. Physics is reflection on the divine ideas of Creation; therefore physics is a form of divine service.

WE ARE IN OUR OWN TIME very far from this theological foundation or justification of physics. But we still follow this method, because it has been so successful. The essential basis for its success was the possibility of repeating the experiments. We can finally agree about their results because we have learned that experiments carried out under precisely the same conditions do actually lead to the same results. This is not at all obvious. It can only be true if the events follow exactly a causal chain, a sequence of cause and effect. But on account of its success this kind of causality has—in the course of the years—been accepted as one of the fundamental principles of science. The philosopher Kant stressed the point that causality in this sense is not an empirical law; but it does belong to our method of science. Indeed it is the condition for that kind of science which was inaugurated in the 16th century and has been elaborated ever since.

A consequence of this attitude in science is the assumption that we study Nature "as it really is." We imagine a world which exists in space and time and follows its natural laws, independent of any observing subject. Therefore, in observing the phenomena we take great care to eliminate any influence from the observer. When we produce new phenomena by means of our experimental equipment we are convinced that we do not really produce new phenomena—that, actually, these phenomena occur frequently in nature without our interference, and our equipment has merely been made to isolate and to study them. In all these points we still follow confidently the tradition from the time of Copernicus and Galileo.

But are we really entitled to do so, considering the well-known epistemological difficulties of Quantum theory? In our big accelerators we study the collisions between elementary particles—and we imagine that even if we had not built the accelerators such phenomena would occur in our atmosphere on account of the cosmic radiation. But would there be waves or particles coming from the outside, and would they produce interference patterns or tracks? What does actually happen when we do not observe? and do we know what the word "actually" means in this context? These are hard questions, and we see that tradition can lead us into difficulties.

IT IS GENERALLY BELIEVED that our science is empirical, and that we draw our concepts and our mathematical constructs from empirical data. If this was the whole truth, we should when entering a new field introduce only those quantities that can directly be observed, and formulate natural laws only by means of these quantities.

When I was a young man I believed that this

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was just the philosophy which Albert Einstein had followed in his theory of Relativity. I tried, therefore, to take a corresponding and related step in Quantum theory by introducing the matrices. But when I later asked Einstein about it, he told me: "This may have been my philosophy, but it is nonsense all the same. It is never possible to introduce only observable quantities in a theory. It is a theory which decides what can be observed . . . . " What he meant by this remark was that when we go from the immediate observation—a black line on a photographic plate, a discharge in a counter—to the phenomena we are interested in, we must make use of theory and of theoretical concepts. We cannot separate the empirical process of observation from the mathematical construct and its concepts. The most conspicuous demonstrations of this thesis by Einstein were later the relations of uncertainty.

But this new situation in Quantum theory does not necessarily question the traditional method in science. It only questions the assumption that concepts and mathematical constructs can simply be taken from experience. It is true that in Quantum theory we cannot rely on strict causality. But by repeating the experiments many times we can from observations finally derive statistical distributions, and by repeating such series of experiments we can arrive at objective statements concerning these distributions. This is a standard method in particle physics, and it may be considered a natural extension of the traditional method.

So in the end it does seem that with regard to scientific method we continue to follow strictly the tradition inaugurated in the time of Galileo. In spite of the many different fields which have been developed—physics, chemistry, biology, atomic and nuclear science, etc.—the fundamental method has always been the same. One has the impression that in this period most scientists believed that this was the only acceptable method which could lead to objective (and that meant correct) statements concerning the behaviour of nature.

THERE HAS BEEN ONE ATTEMPT to work on an entirely different line which I should mention.

The German poet Goethe tried to return to a descriptive science—a science which would be interested only in the visible natural phenomena, not in experiments which produce artificial new effects. He objected to the separation of the phenomena into their objective and their subjective side, and he was filled with fear of the destruction of nature by an overflowing of technical science. In our time, when we know of the contamination of air and water, the poisoning of the soil by chemical fertilisers, and atomic weapons, we can understand Goethe's fear better than his contemporaries could. But Goethe's attempt did not really influence the course of science. The success of the traditional method was just too overwhelming.

BESIDES THE EFFECT OF TRADITION in the selection of problems and in scientific method, the influence of tradition is perhaps strongest in shaping or passing on the concepts by which we try to get hold of phenomena. The history of science is not only a history of discoveries and observations. It is also a history of concepts. I will, therefore, try to discuss briefly the history of concepts during the period following Copernicus and Galileo, and the rôle of tradition in this history.

The new science started with astronomy, and therefore the positions and the velocities of bodies were natural first concepts for describing phenomena. Newton, in his *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, added the concepts of mass and of force. He introduced the "quantity of motion", which is essentially what we call *momentum*; and later such concepts as kinetic and potential energy completed the conceptual basis of mechanics. It remained for more than a century the basis of exact science as a whole; and its success was so convincing that whenever the phenomena suggested new concepts the scientist tried to follow tradition and to reduce them to the old ones. The motion of fluids was pictured as motion of the infinitely many smallest parts of the fluid; their dynamic behaviour was successfully treated according to Newton's laws. When in the second half of the 18th century interest was concentrated on electricity and magnetism the "concept of force" was used for describing the phenomena; and force was meant in the sense of mechanics, a force acting instantaneously and depending only on the positions and the velocities of the bodies concerned. In order to understand the different states and the chemical behaviour of matter Gassendi revived the idea of its atomic constitution; and his followers used Newtonian mechanics for describing the motion of the atoms and the resulting properties of matter. A beam of light could be considered as consisting either of small quickly moving particles, or of waves. But even the waves would be the waves in some kind of material, and one could hope that, finally, the smallest parts of this material could be treated according to Newton's laws.

As in the case of scientific method, nobody doubted that this reduction to the mechanical concepts could finally be effected. But here history decided otherwise. In the 19th century it

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became clear, gradually, that electro-magnetic phenomena are of a quite different nature. Faraday introduced the concept of the electro-magnetic field; and after the completion of the theory by Maxwell this concept gained more and more reality. The physicists began to understand that a field of force in space and time could be just as real as a position or a velocity of a mass, and that there was no point in considering it as a property of some unseen material called "ether." Here tradition was more a hindrance than a help. Actually it was not until the discovery of Relativity that the idea of the ether was really given up, and thereby the hope of reducing electro-magnetism to mechanics.

A SIMILAR DEVELOPMENT can be recognised in the theory of heat. But here the alienation from mechanical concepts could be seen only in rather subtle points. To begin with, everything looked very simple. A piece of matter consists of many atoms or molecules. Statistical considerations about the mechanical motions of these many particles should be sufficient to describe the behaviour of matter under the influence of heat or chemical changes. The concepts of temperature and of entropy seemed just adequate to get hold of this statistical behaviour. I think it was Gibbs who first understood what an abyss had been opened up in physics by these concepts. His idea of the "canonical ensemble" demonstrates that the word temperature characterised our degree of knowledge of the mechanical behaviour of the atoms, but not their objective mechanical behaviour. The word refers to a certain kind of observation: namely, it requires an exchange of heat between the system and the measuring equipment, the thermometer; it requires a thermodynamical equilibrium. Therefore, if we know the temperature of a system, we cannot know its energy accurately (the inaccuracy depending on the number of degrees of freedom in the system).

Of course, tradition worked very strongly against this kind of interpretation. I believe that the majority of physicists did not accept it before, finally, in our controversy Quantum theory was completely formulated. But I would like to mention that when I entered Niels Bohr's Copenhagen institute in 1924, the first thing Bohr demanded was that I should read Gibbs' book on thermodynamics. And he added that Gibbs had been the only physicist who had really understood statistical thermodynamics.

IT WAS WORSE in other fields. In the theory of Relativity and in Quantum theory we had to learn that some of the oldest traditional concepts did not work satisfactorily and had to be replaced by better ones. Space and Time are not as independent of each other as Newton had believed; they are related by the "Lorentz transformation." The state of a system in Quantum mechanics can be characterised mathematically by a vector in a space of many dimensions, and this vector implies statements concerning the statistical behaviour of the system under given conditions of observation. An objective description of the system in the traditional sense is impossible, and I will not go into the details. It has been very difficult for physicists to accept these changes in the fundamental concepts.

BUT MY THEME is the rôle of tradition in science, and I must ask whether tradition has really been only a hindrance in these developments—whether it has just filled the minds of the scientists with prejudices or preconceptions, the removal of which was the most important condition for progress. At this point the problem comes from the word "prejudice."

When we speak about our investigations, about the phenomena we are going to study, we need a language. We need words, and words are the verbal expression of concepts. At the beginning of an enquiry it simply cannot be avoided that the words are connected with the old concepts. The new ones do not yet exist. Therefore these so-called "prejudices" are a necessary part of our language and cannot easily be eliminated. We learn language by tradition; the traditional concepts form our way of thinking about problems and determine our questions. When the experiments of Lord Rutherford suggested that the atom consists of a nucleus surrounded by electrons, one could not help asking: What is the location or the motion of the electrons in these outer parts of the atom? What are the electronic orbits? Or, when one observed events on very distant stars, it was only sensible to ask: Are these two events simultaneous or not?

To realise that such questions have no meaning is a very difficult and painful process. It should not be belittled by the word prejudice. One may, therefore, say that in a state of science where fundamental concepts are to be changed, tradition is both the condition for progress and a hindrance. It usually takes a very long time before the new concepts have been generally accepted.

LET ME FINALLY APPLY THESE IDEAS to the present state of physics.

In our time the fundamental structure of matter is one of the central problems, and the concept of the "elementary particle" has dominated this

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problem since the time of Democritus. This can be clearly recognised in our pictures and our questions. A lump of matter consists of molecules. A molecule consists of atoms. An atom consists of nucleus and electrons. A nucleus consists of protons and neutrons.

And a proton?—well, that could be an elementary particle. But we would term it "elementary" only if it could not be divided again. We would then wish that it would be a point of mass and of charge. But a proton has a finite size and *can* be divided. From a collision between two energetic protons many pieces may emerge. But these pieces are not smaller than the proton—they are just particles like the protons, *e.g.*, some objects out of a whole spectrum of particles, the charge of which is (if it is not zero) not smaller than that of the proton. So what we see in such a collision should perhaps not be called a division of the proton. It is the creation of new particles out of the kinetic energy of the colliding relativity protons.

If the proton is not "elementary", what then does it consist of? It consists of matter; but matter consists of particles. Hence the proton consists of any number and of any kind of particles, and so on.

We see that we do not get a sensible answer to our questions which we have asked and continue to ask according to tradition—and this tradition goes back 2600 years, to the time of Democritus. But we cannot help asking these questions, since our language is bound up with this tradition. We must use words like "divide" or "consist of", or "number of particles", and at the same time we learn from our observations that these words have only a very limited applicability.

Again, it is extremely difficult to get away from our tradition. In one of the most recent papers on elementary particles I read the statement: "From the results of Bjorkén we can conclude that the proton in its electric properties has a granular structure. . . ." It evidently did not occur to the author that such words as "granular structure" have perhaps no other meaning here than merely the scaling law of Bjorkén; that they do not carry any further information. Or another example. Many experimental physicists nowadays look for "quark" particles, particles with a charge 1/3 or 2/3 of the charge of the proton. I am convinced that this intense search for "quarks" is caused by the conscious or unconscious hope of finding the truly elementary particle, the ultimate unit of matter. But even if "quarks" could be found, for all that we know they could, yet again, be divided into two quarks and one antiquark, etc. They would not be more elementary than a proton. You see how extremely difficult it is to get away from an old tradition.

WHAT IS REALLY NEEDED is a change in fundamental concepts. We will have to abandon the philosophy of Democritus and the concept of fundamental elementary particles. And, instead, we will have to accept the concept of fundamental symmetries which is a concept out of the philosophy of Plato.

Just as Copernicus and Galileo abandoned in their method the descriptive science of Aristotle and turned to the structural science of Plato, so we are probably being forced in our concepts to abandon the atomic materialism of Democritus and to turn to the ideas of symmetry in the philosophy of Plato. Once again we would be returning to a very old tradition. But, as I said earlier, such changes are extremely difficult. Even with the change many complicated details will have to be worked out, both experimentally and theoretically, in elementary particle physics. But I do not believe that there will be any spectacular break-through, apart from this change in the concepts.

THESE, THEN, ARE the three most important influences of tradition in science: in the selection of problems, in method, and in concepts. I should perhaps, in conclusion, say a few words about the future development of science. To be sure, I am not interested in futurology. But since we can scarcely work on other problems but those that are given to us by the historical process, we may ask where this process has led to new and interesting questions. In physics I would like to mention astrophysics. In this field the strange properties of the pulsars and the quasars, and perhaps also the gravitational waves, can be considered as a challenge. Then there is the new and wide field of molecular biology where concepts of very different origin, namely physical, chemical and biological concepts, meet and produce a great wealth of interesting new problems. Finally, on the practical side, we have to solve the very urgent problems posed by the deterioration of our environment.

I have mentioned these points not in order to make predictions about the future, but in order to emphasise that we need not invent our problems. The scientific tradition, *i.e.* the historical process, still offers us problems and encourages our efforts. And that is a sign of a very healthy state of affairs in science.

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NOTES & TOPICS

The Writer's Status

By Gillian Tindall

PUBLIC LENDING RIGHT is coming—or is it? It seems to have been coming for a long time, but I suppose that is no guarantee that it will not arrive in the end. It tends to be automatically assumed, both within and without the literary fold, that, as a writer, one must of course be broadly "in favour" of it. It is therefore with considerable trepidation, knowing that I shall call down on myself charges of letting the side down (or some more apparently sophisticated phrase amounting to the same thing) that I mention that I view the whole campaign for PLR with a somewhat critical, not to say derisive eye.

It is not, of course, that I am averse to more money as such, for myself or for quite a lot of my fellow novelists. I will also concede the theoretical proposition that a copy of a novel which is read by perhaps fifty or a hundred people logically ought to bring its author more than the copy which is bought and read by only one. If everyone had to pay, say, twopence, every time he took a book of mine out of a library, then that would be quite a lot of extra twopences. It would, however, be many, many fewer twopences than would be received by prominent detective story manufacturers, Harold Robbins, or the estate of the late Jacqueline Once-is-not-enough Susann. In fact the one thing that PLR, as at present envisaged, would ensure is that modestly well-known authors would receive only a modest financial boost from it, whereas those whose talents are already over-rewarded would get even more. So let us, once and for all, dispose of the notion, so cherished by PLR's active advocates, that there would be anything particularly "fair" about such a scheme when actually put into practice. Better, perhaps, to conclude, with the editorial writer in the *Telegraph* a few months ago—

> The scheme is unjust, arbitrary and politically cowardly—but it is better than nothing. Authors should take the money and run.

As soon, however, as one begins to examine this pervasive concept of "fairness" more closely, one realises that the monetary issue is by no means the whole of the story. It is only the outward and slightly misleading symbol of much deeper issues, to do with writers' identity, status, and craving for recognition. And this, surely, is why the PLR campaign has become so heated and why writers who are less than wholly earnest about it tend to be regarded as threatening or traitorous. The campaign fires have been stoked by the contention that, because a person who chooses writing as his or her main occupation is, in one sense, a "professional", he should therefore be remunerated on a scale comparable with that to be gained from other professional occupations. This belief seems to have become an article of faith with many, and precisely because it is being treated as if it ought to be a matter of national honour and conscience it is not being subjected to much rational scrutiny. In fact, a semantic confusion, not to say obfuscation of the issue, is taking place. The sacred but vague word "professional" is allowed to carry the argument along on its own misleading momentum.

THERE IS A MAGAZINE ARTICLE regularly written by one or another toiling author, pointing out with varying degrees of indignation or resignation that most writers do not earn a sufficient average income from writing to make them the financial equivalent of a primary school teacher, much less a doctor or lawyer. Only one writer in six makes over £1,200 a year from writing alone and among those who write only novels the proportion is far lower. Two out of three writers make, even with occasional journalism, less per week than the dole. It isn't *fair*: no other skilled work is so shamefully underpaid.

This argument is all right as far as it goes. The trouble is, once you begin to analyse it, it is *too* good. Are we really to infer that all novelists who achieve the minimal and non-competitive step of getting published "deserve" to earn enough thereby to live on? And if so for how long? Six months? Six years? A lifetime? We live, here in Britain, in a society still comparatively unregimented and unbureaucratised by Continental standards; much latitude is therefore allowed to the individual in styling himself "Writer", on his tax-returns or anywhere else. Since the graduate wife who has published one slim novel years ago before immersing herself in maternity has the right to go on calling herself a "writer", does that make it the duty of society to offer her "professional" skill an annual, professional remuneration? The obvious answer is No. Yet large numbers of people of both sexes, whose literary work is almost as intermittent as this and who, moreover, make no pretence themselves to

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being "full-time professionals", go to swell that supposedly shameful statistic of Underpaid Author in Our Affluent Society.

WE ARE IN THE PRESENCE HERE of a classic romantic myth. Struggling Writer, it is suggested, toils away in his garret (just like his 17th- 18th- or 19th-century counterpart), producing great creative works for next to no reward, or perhaps (bring on the poignant irony) receiving plenty of critical acclaim but little or no cash. But there is a practical issue here which is consistently ducked. Does the Struggling Writer who is having such a tough time earning his living actually make of his writing the full-time occupation that "earning a living" implies? Do indeed most writers (apart from those in regular and therefore well-paid journalism) do anything like as much work as the lawyers, doctors and teachers with which their champions are continually comparing them? Can they, in fact, be rightly considered as being in full-time employment at all?

If I were anything but a writer myself, I should no doubt be wary of making such an indecent suggestion, afraid of convicting myself instantly of *lèse-créativité* and putting myself on the level of the person who reckons (loudly) that it's a cushy job just sitting at a typewriter and he could write a book himself, y'know, if he had the time. . . . But having been a novelist and free-lance journalist myself for many years I know that, whatever I and my kind may suffer in the way of loneliness, frustration, and crises of confidence, we do not suffer from the tyranny of the eight-hour day, the five-day week, the fifty-week year till the age of sixty-five. All jobs have their perks, and time is the writer's. By actually sitting down to write for only about half the hours most people spend at work, plus the occasional burst of voluntary overtime, nearly all of us can do quite as much work as is good for us or our reputations. There is a limit to the number of books any "serious" writer (I exempt crime and pulp writers, the lucky things) can reasonably publish in a given space of time. A respected novelist who took to bringing out a new novel every few months, which would be the probable result today of genuinely full-time labour on the obsolete Dickens-Trollope-Zola model, would find that he had saturated his own market, that reviewers had ceased to take him seriously—and, more important than either of these, that he had run out of things to write about.

Indeed a little thought makes it obvious that not only *need* not a writer sit at his desk for eight hours a day with one hour off for lunch, he *must* not. Fresh and interesting ideas, let alone knowledge of life and personal experience, are not to be found sitting alone in a room communing with a stack of paper. There is an optimistic idea (underpinning many cultural grants) that authors do better if they have all day in which to write; however, there is little evidence for this belief except where a non-fiction research project is involved, and abundant indication, in writers' stumbling careers, that the reverse may be true. In fact rather a lot of novelists, to judge from their books, suffer not from too much else going on in their lives but too little.

It *is* unfair, but in novel-writing, and even in the apparently more orderly field of non-fiction, dedicated professionalism does not necessarily pay off one bit, and the concept of "deserving" is meaningless. There is not, and never has been, any logical connection between the value of a book to its potential public, its monetary value to the author, and the amount of work he has put into it. You cannot ensure that a book is good, or even improved from what it might be, by working at it regularly and long. Nor does conscious experience-gathering often provide fuel for the idiosyncratic creative machine to equal that which is stock-piled, in all unconsciousness, by the man (or woman) in the days before Being a Writer intervened between living and reacting.

BEING A WRITER is usually not at all conducive to good writing, and the more successful the practitioner the more this problem, recognised or unrecognised, will loom. Here, I might add, married women writers have a built-in advantage. Not because their husbands support them financially—they may, but there again they may not, and children don't support anyone—but because husbands and children *make demands* and *use up time*. The very things that are popularly supposed to impede creativity often actually feed it. A degree of tension and pressure is, for many, the thing they need in order to function in top gear, and this situation a married woman's life readily supplies. By comparison the married male, with no excuse for *not* sitting at his typewriter all day long, left reverently alone ("*Sshh*, Daddy's working!"), his creature comforts efficiently supplied, may face a bleak vista of unstructured self-determination—the nagging need to act as if he were Somebody combined with the writer's chronic fear that perhaps he doesn't really exist at all.

FOR THIS IS THE CENTRAL PARADOX of the writer's life: the practical conditions of that life tend to cut him off from the true sources of his work—that is, from ordinary, non-creative existence. Indeed the very insistence of certain

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writers that their efforts "ought" to be remunerated on a more handsome scale may indicate the extent to which they have lost touch with real life, real people, real labour. While I would not deny that some writers who come to feel hounded by lack of monetary success have good cause for grievance, many have not. Through inexperience and egocentricity their perceptions of what they might rightfully expect from the world tend to be considerably more unrealistic than those of most men and women; and it is really this, and not any particular prevailing system of payment, which is their tragedy. A large number of those who earn under a thousand pounds a year (or indeed the 50% who earn under five hundred) are the possessors of only modest talent. Neither a mass readership nor an intellectual one is likely to ensure them permanent, substantial support under any system of payment.

YET THERE IS A FURTHER, important factor to be taken into consideration. Just as demands for more money give a respectable guise to what may really be demands for more general recognition, so the writer's tendency to give himself airs may in fact be an essential part of his defensive armoury. After hearing a few hard-hearted remarks of mine on the subject, a writer wrote to me:

> Shunted to the fringes of our society and often summarily dismissed as cranks, eccentrics or malcontents, an undentable ego and a passionate belief in what they are writing become as important to an author's survival as a tranquil atmosphere in which to work and enough money to pay the rent ....

I take the point—although I would add in corollary that what is really desired by the writer is *other* people's passionate belief in what he is writing, and that the award of enough money to pay the rent etc. may symbolise this. It is not really the writer's work that is damaged by having to labour part-time, or from time to time, at some quite other occupation; good writing is not that fragile. It is his sense of identity as a writer which suffers in such a situation. You are only really a writer in so far as people think you are a writer, and if they think you are a teacher, or a casual Parks Dept. employee, or a bank official called Eliot, T. S., or, come to that, a housewife, then are you, asks the niggling, insecure voice inside, really a writer at all?

THIS, I HAVE COME TO BELIEVE, is the reason why many writers develop such elaborate devices for making their prized identity patent—for formalising it, as it were. These are the people who associate mainly with other

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writers, who join authors' groups and clubs, who help to perpetrate the illusion of a cohesive, identifiable body of people, even campaigning, it may be, for their joint rights, all fellows together. This fantasy is often assisted by the erroneous idea that the position of British writers is somehow uniquely bad in comparison with that of their Continental comrades—that "only in this Philistine country do we value culture so little. . . ." In practice, in a country like France with no proper public library system and the book-selling scene dominated by the Literary Prize and the best-seller, the position of the also-ran novelist is still more bleak. But this fact does not fit conveniently into the convictions of those British writers who need to see themselves as a beleaguered group of staunchly creative spirits. That creative writers, at any rate, have to be private and individual people, and that club-babability is probably inimical to the actual exercise of the writer's function, is beside the point. When with writers they feel like writers; and this may be what matters, at a deep level as well as at a superficial one.

Another version of the fantasy is *I Have an Office Really*. This game (which may in all seriousness be a useful and important one to the player) is played by a strict or at any rate well-publicised adherence to work schedules, on such lines as "I'm-always-at-my-desk-between-ten-and-three-even-if-I-only-manage-three-lines." Very often it is combined with the associated game *My Accountant and My Royalties*, which has the advantage of allowing the writer to keep protectively silent about the real nature of his work while talking volubly, and often arrogantly, about how he has managed to get himself turned into a tax loss in Nassau (like Lewis Carroll's character who became a railway share). What, indeed, could be more apparently hard-headed, more reassuringly and uncreatively normal, more impeccably *professional* than such a line? Don't ask me how I do my writing—just feel my identity.

What the Cold War Was About

By Sidney Hook

ONE OF THE QUESTIONS Solzhenitsyn raises about Stalin's systematic terror has for many years puzzled Western observers of the Soviet Union—and indeed, long before Solzhenitsyn himself discovered the character of the life around him. How account for the docility of the Soviet population as the waves of ruthless suppression periodically swept millions to their doom? Why was there no concerted resistance to the extreme irrationality of the measures of repression? Why did so many innocent persons passively cooperate with the agencies of their own destruction—typified in Solzhenitsyn's own behaviour in guiding his lost escort of KGB captors to the Lubianka whose location they did not know? Why didn't he, and others like him, turn against them or go underground?[1]

There were to be sure episodic outbursts of peasant resistance against the excesses of collectivisation but there was no hard news about them. They had no echoing response in the cities whose inhabitants were unprepared for the great purges that followed after the programme of collectivisation was completed. After all, despite the accusations and charges of assassination, arson, mass poisoning, etc., against the victims of the terror, which filled the press and airwaves, there were remarkably few, if any, attempts on the lives of the leading Communist functionaries, from Stalin down. One would have imagined that the litany of horrors with which the public was regaled by officialdom would have suggested some desperate resorts to violence against the architects of the terror by those who were kinsmen, biological or ideological, of the countless victims. There was nothing or little comparable to the heroic acts of retaliatory vengeance of revolutionists in Czarist times against much milder forms of oppression. There is no real evidence of attempts on Stalin's life or of his chief subordinates.

I ONCE THOUGHT I understood why. It was explained to me by General Walter Krivitsky, former Head of Soviet Intelligence in Western Europe, at the time of his defection in the late 1930s. He asserted that there was no genuine opposition to the régime because the security

[1] There has been an interesting controversy in *The Times* (London) on this whole subject, following the rather one-sided article of George Feifer "Solzhenitsyn the Crusader may prove to be his own worst enemy", (3 January). See also the critical comments by Richard Davy (4 January), Robert Conquest (8 January) and Michael Scammell (11 January).

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agencies themselves organised the opposition in order to eliminate it more effectively. What they organised was not those who were politically opposed—there was no political opposition by that time among the general public—but those who were discontented for any reason at all. The NKVD, he reported, sent its agents, as well as ordinary citizens who had been intimidated by the apparatus for some trivial infraction of laws, through all strata of the population. Like magnets that draw steel filings to themselves their agents attracted the disaffected.[2]

In the light of Solzhenitsyn's grisly account of the irrational scope and sweep of the terror, this system of provocation, which lent itself to easy abuse, is not plausible as a sufficient explanation of the phenomenon. For not only were the disaffected, the grumblers and mumblers, swept up into the maw of the destructive machines but myriads of others. It is not the character of the resistance that must be explained but its almost complete absence.

THE PROFOUNDER REASON for the absence of widespread opposition to the unspeakable atrocities perpetrated against the peoples of the Soviet Union flows from the monolithic nature of Communist society which by the time Stalin had come to power had destroyed every vestige of autonomy and independence, not only in political life, but in every aspect of life. There were no countervailing institutions, powers or tendencies to limit the will, no matter how arbitrary, of the leadership of the Communist Party. Even under 20th-century Czarism the tradition of autocracy was not absolute—trade unions; local representative bodies; the press; the universities; the arts in their varied forms; national and ethnic loyalties; the Courts; the Duma itself, to some extent and on some occasions, checked the hegemony of the central governing apparatus. But within a decade of the Bolshevik conquest of power all of this pluralism, however embryonic, had disappeared. There was no longer the support of some institutional legitimacy for those who wished to say "No" to the arbitrary decrees, the midnight arrests, and the unparalleled cruelties of the régime. Even the vestigial influence of the membership on the party hierarchy had disappeared. The membership itself was being ruthlessly purged.

[2] I have described the details in my *Reason, Social Myths, and Democracy* (New York, 1940).

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THERE ARE SOME INDIVIDUALS of heroic stature who can be self-sufficient in their opposition to tyranny. They are seldom effective because—with the exception of Titans like Solzhenitsyn and Sakharov who have won international acclaim—they can be transformed into non-persons with ease if they are permitted to live. For there is no resonance to their opposition and protest. There is hardly anyone or any means to spread the news of their fate. Even those who fall from power cannot easily recruit a mass base since they have no independent organs of communication. When I was doing research at the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow in 1929 a flaming young Communist (whose apartment I had sub-leased and who had been sympathetic to the Left opposition) assured me with the utmost conviction and bitterness that Trotsky had requested permission of the Central Committee to leave the Soviet Union in order "to enjoy the comforts of the bourgeois world." He was completely unaware that Trotsky had been carried kicking and struggling first into exile and then over the border.

The scholarly President of Stanford University, Richard W. Lyman, has recently reminded us (in the course of an impressive defence of private universities) of Edmund Burke's profound insight into the support that a pluralistic society gives to individual liberties. Despite the fact that Burke was unhistorical about the nature of history—whose record of radical change revolutionists could cite with as good, or better, authority as standpatters—he was prescient about the dangers of any attempt to make a clean sweep of all the institutions of the past.

> The classic defense of the pluralistic society is that of Edmund Burke, stimulated (or provoked) by the French Revolution. The revolutionaries, Burke argued, in their zeal for liberty and equality in the abstract, were busily tearing down all the intermediate corporate bodies and parochial loyalties that stood between the individual and the State. These "little platoons", as Burke called them, were attacked in the name of the most high-sounding principles: Down with feudal distinctions, down with the special privileges of the guilds and the obscurantism and greed of the 18th-century Church. But the result of thus wiping the slate clean, Burke concluded, was to leave the individual defenseless and alone, confronted by the power of an all-encompassing State, which was theoretically his, but over which he had in actuality little or no control.

The pluralism of democratic countries stands in sharp contrast to the monolithism of all totalitarian cultures. And if that pluralism was ever vindicated, Watergate and its extraordinary consequences have amply done so. The Courts, the press, the expressions of outraged opinion in universities and churches were more than a match for the Executive Power and the privileges it had built up over the years.

ALL THE MORE ASTONISHING, therefore, is the revival of an attitude which overlooking the pluralism of Western democratic life seeks to equate it, because of its episodic failures and deficiencies, with the monolithic terror of Communist cultures like that of the Soviet Union and mainland China. The odd thing about the recurrence of this fantastic political judgment is that it finds its most vehement exponents in the academy, not only among young New Leftists, whose youth and disillusionment to some extent mitigates their foolishness, but among some older academicians who, after they have won their laurels in the field of their speciality, have suddenly discovered *the* social or political problem to whose existence they have apparently been oblivious most of their life.

A recent illustration that can serve as a paradigm case of this kind of foolishness is provided by a speech delivered in Japan by George Wald, a Nobel Laureate, and reproduced on the *Op-Ed* page of the *New York Times* of 17 August 1974. "All that matters now is political power", he declares. "It is too late for Declarations, for Popular Appeals." What, then, does he propose? Simply that the people of the Soviet Union and the United States "come together to take control of their lives, to wrest political power" from their masters. One rubs one's eyes in disbelief. Are the citizens of the U.S. and of the free world in the same state as those of the Soviet Union? Are their political institutions no more free, no more able to effect changes than those of the Soviet Union? "No nation so closely resembles the United States of America as the Soviet Union", Wald proclaims. One naturally wonders whether he has ever visited the Soviet Union or talked to those who have fled from it or read not merely Solzhenitsyn but any of the hundreds of volumes published by his colleagues in the Russian Institute of Harvard and other universities. Is the relative freedom of the United States and Western Europe altogether an illusion?

GEORGE WALD, an authority on the physiology of vision, presumes to speak with equal authority about the illusions of politics as he does about the illusions of sight. "In the so-called 'free world' it is not the governments", he instructs us, "they are only the servants. . . . the 'free world' is run by enterprises such as General Motors, ITT, the Chase Manhattan Bank. . . . Their wealth and power exceeds any previously known throughout human history." Alas! We can only conclude from this that George Wald knows very little about human history—not only about the history

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of past tyranny but about the history of his own times. Can any sober mind really believe that these business institutions are more powerful in their country than Hitler and Stalin and even Roosevelt's New Deal were in theirs? After all these corporations are creatures of law, and powerful as they are, a resolute Congress and Court, *if they wished*, could cripple and even break them up, by corrective and punitive legislation whenever the need arose. Even Presidents have on occasion proved more powerful than corporations, especially if they are backed by the Court. The Auto Workers Union has proved stronger than General Motors time and again.

As if uncertain, in a moment of fleeting doubt, about his political vision, Wald seeks to support his preposterous equation between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. with respect to human freedoms, by invoking the name of Andrei Sakharov. After proclaiming that "no nation so closely resembles the United States of America as the Soviet Union", he goes on to add:

> "That is what Andrei Sakharov told us a few years ago, and went on to propose that both nations now join forces to work for the good of humanity. *For that he is virtually a prisoner in his own country*" [my italics].

Wald has read Sakharov to little purpose! It is simply false to assert that Sakharov believes that, with respect to elementary political rights, the U.S. and U.S.S.R. are on the same plane or anywhere near each other. The very contrary is true. Sakharov is appealing to the rulers of the Kremlin to grant their subjects the elementary political rights that already exist in the United States and throughout Western Europe. He is properly critical of a great many things in the United States but well aware that their correction depends upon a functioning Bill of Rights—a functioning Bill of Rights completely absent in the U.S.S.R. That is why it is easier for Sakharov to publish his views in the United States, even those critical of the United States, than to publish them in the Soviet Union!

A "close resemblance", indeed.

THE DEPTHS OF FOOLISHNESS in Wald's position are all the more startling in the face of the absurdities apparent on the surface of his words. He urges in his article that the American people "wrest political power" from their masters. Sakharov is a prisoner in his own country for urging much less than this, for urging only that the régime obey its own professed laws, that it live up to the rights enumerated in its own paper constitution. Now, is Wald a prisoner in *his* country for his incitements and radical words? Is anyone for talking

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nonsense of this sort? Why, then, does he persist from his eminence of almost unlimited comfortable freedom, affluence, and great prestige in drawing the equation he does?

ACADEMICS like Wald are not alone in these bizarre judgments. Occasionally, the writers and editors of sophisticated periodicals deliver themselves of comparisons just as dubious. The belated resignation of Richard M. Nixon was greeted by some of them not as a happy consequence of due process but as the overthrow of a dictatorial system like that of the Greek Colonels, or that of the Caetano dictatorship in Portugal, or even of some Oriental despotism. *The New Yorker* (of 12 August 1974) hails the fact that within a short space of time the Greek military junta had yielded to a democratic centrist régime, that something similar had occurred in Portugal, and that the despotic régime of Thailand had been overthrown. It then adds that in the United States, too, "an invisible equivalent of these celebrations" of victory had quietly taken place. What was being celebrated? Why, that "power reverts to the people. . . . Here, too, freedom had somehow won the day."

One can only ask, confronted by this political amalgam, whether *The New Yorker* is freer today than it was before Nixon was forced to resign in order to escape certain conviction after impeachment? And as for power *reverting* to the people, who elected Nixon, whether wisely or not, in the first place—the resignation of Nixon was a clear vindication of the existence of a free society; it did not first come into being with his political demise. There is an obvious reason why the Soviet Union and mainland China have played his fate down.

Fortunately not all writers in *The New Yorker* are as politically obtuse as Wald and the author of the editorial note. In his review of Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago* in *The New Yorker* (of 18 February, 1974), George Steiner, the gifted critic, incisively cuts to the heart of the matter:

> The ugliness of American politics, the mendacities and violence that sour our hopes, are real enough. But they are as of another planet, Edenic, compared with the daily routine of *The Gulag Archipelago*. To draw facile parallels between the two is a moral and intellectual indecency.

AS AN UNRECONSTRUCTED "COLD WARRIOR" who believes that the "Cold War", although not completely successful, was a war of *defence* that still prevented "the hot war" that threatened universal disaster—as an old-fashioned liberal who still believes that a genuine liberal must be not only anti-Fascist but anti-Communist—I am sometimes asked to justify my position. The shortest answer that I currently give to those who were, historically speaking, born yesterday, is:

"Read Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago*. This was what the cold war was about. Whatever may have been the reasons that led the statesmen and businessmen of the West to oppose Communism, those of us who were democratic socialists, liberals, intellectuals who refused to kowtow to any party line in literature, art, philosophy and culture, were moved first and foremost by the desire to prevent the extension of *The Gulag Archipelago* from the living hell of Stalin's concentration camp universe to other countries of the world.

"On a global scale it is necessary to oppose social and political evils on *all* fronts. But there is an order of priorities. Today although conditions in the Communist world may not be as evil as they were under Stalin in his heyday, we cannot strike our spiritual weapons and sign a cultural and political détente in the struggle for freedom—whatever other agreements, commercial or technological, may be made in the interests of peace. Ideology is not everything. Nothing is. But so long as men and women are not puppets determined by blind social and economic forces, so long as the future, conditioned as it may be, presents alternatives of choice and action, the ideas and ideals of human beings may redetermine the course of history. Opposing all totalitarian ideologies, we must make distinctions in a world threatened by nuclear weapons between those that are purely internal and those whose ideology, when the time seems auspicious to its dictatorial leadership, can be invoked to justify a crusade against the free institutions of democratic countries.

"Whatever form *détente* takes with powers like China and the Soviet Union, so long as they are wedded to their ideologies we must not abandon the use of the moral weapons of education and propaganda against these systems of organised terror. If we fight this kind of cold war, it may not be necessary, if we retain our defensive capacity, to fight any other.

"The more people read and learn about the contents of Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago*, the more likely it is that its message will penetrate the iron and bamboo curtains of the world; and the greater the hope that the peoples of those countries will acquire the same rights and powers with respect to their régimes that the citizens of the United States and other Western democratic nations possess with respect to their governments."

The preservation of peace must of course take first priority but not at the cost of all human rights. The unending struggle for human rights

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at home and abroad is what defines the sincere commitment to democracy as a way of life regardless of the shifting and temporary necessities of foreign policy. If the right of emigration is a valid human right it applies as much to the Chinese who wish to leave mainland China as it does to the inhabitants of South Africa and to the Soviet Union.

DOES ALL THIS MEAN that we must strike a truce with the manifold ills and evils of American society today or of any poor corner of European society, that we are to neglect the responsibilities of unfulfilled promises to the badly fed, the poorly housed and to those denied equal opportunities to achieve the education and careers appropriate to their talents? Not at all. In the struggle for the minds and allegiance of men and women throughout the world, the most powerful argument in the long run on behalf of the relatively free societies of the West is that of example. Bedevilled as we are by the multiplicity of problems there is plenty of work to be done. They require specific programmes of continuing reform in almost every area. That work is hampered when silly equations are drawn between the imperfect pluralistic democracies of the West, especially in the light of the impressive historical perspective of the progress won in the last generation, and the Gulag Archipelagos of the totalitarian powers.

Conversation with Solzhenitsyn

ALEXANDER ISAYEVICH, *I should like to single out some of the themes in the collection of essays which you mentioned at your press conference. One of your pieces is a response to Sakharov's 1968 essay.*[1] *You referred to Sakharov with great warmth. But what are your basic differences with him?*

SOLZHENITSYN: The main difference probably concerns the role of Marxist ideology in the Soviet Union. Sakharov, expressing a fairly widespread opinion, says that ideology is now dead and gives no direction to anyone, neither on the internal nor the external policy of the Soviet Union. The leaders themselves have no belief in it, and are simply trying to hold on to power, while society has rejected it long ago.

On the face of it, one can be easily persuaded to accept this mistaken interpretation, but it is a very serious error. Ideology is dead indeed, but its malignant poison floods our souls and all our life. Ideology is dead, but it still makes of all of us slaves—and what is most terrifying in our régime is not that we are subordinated to rulers with unlimited power, but that our souls are in the claws of this ideology. Ideology has permeated the entire Soviet system from its very inception, beginning with that secret Lenin letter about the destruction of the Church which has nothing to do with the wish to strengthen political power but only expresses an intense hatred for religion and the clergy.[2] Ideology, then, runs through the entire history of the Soviet Union. As one of our co-authors, Melik Agursky, a Jewish cybernetics expert, has aptly remarked, the entire process of collectivisation was dictated by the need, the desire to destroy the spiritual life of the people, the spiritual life of the peasants, to destroy religion. Let us remember the Purges of the 1930s, when everyone had to step forward and spit at himself. Remember the recent public self-abasement in China, with its destruction of entire

JANIS SAPIETS *is a Russian-speaking journalist living in London. His tape-recorded conversation, originally broadcast in the BBC Russian service, was conducted in Zurich at Solzhenitsyn's house, shortly after the press conference at which Solzhenitsyn announced the publication of "From Under the Boulders", a collection of essays written by him and six of his friends still in Moscow.*

[1] Alexei Sakharov, *Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom* (André Deutsch, London), 1968.

[2] An unpublished secret letter by Lenin to the members of the Politburo, 19 March 1922. Text in *Le Messager périodique de l'Action Chrétienne des Etudiants Russes* (No. 98, 1970).

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classes. It is ideology which demands all this. No political power ever demands such an abundance of hatred, such an abundance of destruction.

Today the leaders of the Soviet Union may not seem to attach so much importance to ideology. They may appear to be thinking only of power. But ideology directs all their actions, it compels them to try to expand their influence against all reason and necessity. And what is it that has so magically attracted the West? Is it really possible that the naked power of a small group of people could have put such a spell on the Western intelligentsia for so many years? No, it is ideology —the most dangerous and the best disguised of all the totalitarian ideologies, and it has been with us already for more than half-a-century. Where in history have we ever seen anything like this: that nations should be made to celebrate the anniversary of their Occupation as their Day of National Liberation? Was the occupation of Czechoslovakia not caused by ideological considerations? Czechoslovakia had no intention of leaving the Warsaw Pact. She was quite prepared to support the Eastern Bloc both economically and politically; but it was the ideology which was put in question. It was suggested that you can think differently—and the tanks began to roll. We see no horrors in history comparable to what was done in our Archipelago.

I have particularly emphasised in my *Gulag Archipelago* that the regime by itself would never have been capable of committing these evil crimes just for the sake of simply keeping others in subjection. To commit such crimes the perpetrators had to be armed with ideology. According to ideology, murder is not necessarily bad—to murder may be a good thing. There are "progressive" murders, there are murders for the sake of a great cause. It is ideology which is responsible for the murder of millions of our people. Sakharov underestimates the dreadful consequences of ideology in our time—the lie inside us, the forced lie which cripples our souls. Ideology is responsible for the actions of our leaders and their official representatives. Yesterday, at the press conference, I quoted what is almost a joke. At the recent conference on world population, the Soviet delegate steps forward and says that hunger is not caused by over-population but by capitalism. He does not believe this himself, and those who sent him don't believe it either, and he knows that he sounds a stupid fool. Yet he says it all the same, because ideology demands it. The others object: "But Mr Soviet Representative, Sir, how is it that you have to buy bread from us if it is capitalism that breeds hunger?" And he puts himself in this absurd situation, and does not know what to answer, because it is ideology that has made him speak in this way. Ideology maims our souls, it corrupts us. Nothing in the Soviet Union is more insufferable than ideology.

THE SECOND POINT in the differences between Sakharov and myself is perhaps this: he allows himself to be influenced by a very guarded attitude—quite common in our country—towards national consciousness. In the Soviet Union there is a very heated atmosphere; and Sakharov expresses not only his own point of view, but the intensity of an entire social group. When I gave my Nobel Prize lecture, I used these words: "The disappearance of nations would impoverish us no less than if all people had become alike, with one character and one face. Nations are the wealth of mankind, its collective personalities. The tiniest of them wears its own special colours and bears within itself a particular facet of God's purpose." I said this, and it was received with general approval. Everyone saw it as a kind of polite bow; everyone was happy, no one was offended. But if one repeats these words in our country and applies them to the Russian people, if one says that the Russian people, as all other peoples, embodies some sort of personality and that this personality must be realised, has to manifest itself in history—then this immediately creates tension among us, provokes an outburst of stereotyped phrases which are used carelessly, and out of context. Patriotism, Nationalism, Chauvinism—they all get muddled up together.

That is why my letter to the Soviet leaders was totally misinterpreted by Moscow intellectuals and by the Western press. The suggestion to renounce all external expansion, to set free all those whom we are oppressing, and to concentrate instead on our own country's internal tasks was interpreted as nationalism, chauvunism, and almost imperialism. Our present collection of essays deals in several places with just this question of national consciousness. As Agursky has noted, this makes him, a Jew and a Zionist, feel at one with us because of the great importance which we attach to national consciousness and to the right of every nation to develop without its own separate identity being distorted. A nation has an identity which emerges in the course of its entire history in the same way as the true personality of a man is only revealed in a biography which encompasses his entire life. In the same way, only part of a nation's identity is revealed at any given moment, and it is only in the course of its entire history that its identity is revealed fully.

As for other serious differences with Sakharov, there is perhaps one more point. I have always emphasised that, generally speaking, Sakharov's attitude is a moral one. Sakharov's point of view,

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his stand, is much loftier than may appear from the way he expresses himself, that is, by means of the political language which is accepted among us. Take the trouble to understand this, and you will not find fault with his formulations. But to do so one must always be aware of his moral attitude, which stands far above his political formulations. For instance, he always seems to attach primary importance to economic solutions, and he overestimates the wisdom and the state of health of the West's social and economic affairs. Sakharov assumes that if Western capital is put into the exploitation of our national resources, Russia will immediately prosper. As if this capital would flow into Russia for the sake of its prosperity, as if those who lay out their capital would not, in the shortest possible time, attempt to make a profit for themselves so as to justify their investment!

These are some of the main differences between Sakharov and myself, but we also have a great deal in common. In fact, if one were to list our points of agreement these would probably outweigh our differences.

—You spoke about the need for repentance and self-limitation as categories of national life. What exactly do you mean by this?

SOLZHENITSYN: I think that in the same way as it is impossible to build a good society without good relations among people, and since all attempts to start from the other end—with social and economic progress—have so far led to nothing, just so one cannot build a good world without good relations among nations. You can't take this pragmatic diplomacy and with it create justice for mankind and good relations. These relations must first be established among nations.

In our country at the moment, in national as well as in other relations, we are lampooning others instead of repenting for our own sins. We have all become used to revealing and unmasking the vices of governments, of other parties, of other nations, other neighbours, other opinions—but not our own! Personal repentance is avoided —I can't even quote one instance of personal openly-acknowledged repentance as regards our public figures. There is simply no one who will confess his errors, or admit his faults. Everyone points to the faults of others.

The same applies to the nation. As long as we go on underlining the advantages and superiority of our own nation while at the same time censuring others, our situation will remain hopeless; we shall never be able to establish national co-existence. In order that nations may live together in friendship without shedding blood we must begin straightway to awaken the need for repentance among all neighbours, among all

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those nations which have many outstanding scores to settle, even to the point of exaggerating our guilt—it is better for us to think that we are guiltier than we really are. Mutual repentance clears the atmosphere.

Repentance—how can one express it? It can be expressed in literature, in art, perhaps in socially committed writing. Of course, it is difficult to say who is capable of doing this and who is not, who is to give expression to the feeling of national guilt. But it is expressed mostly by actions, and actions mean self-limitation. We must introduce the principle of self-limitation as our basic principle—not expansion, not acquisition, not aggression, not an increase of might but, on the contrary, wherever possible, self-limitation as regards both territory and pretensions. It is then that we can concentrate all our efforts on internal developments. My letter to the Soviet leaders was written with this in mind, but I could not explain it properly there in view of the people to whom the letter was addressed.

—But can you really demand repentance from those nations which live under totalitarian régimes?

SOLZHENITSYN: I believe—yes. A totalitarian régime does not exist by itself. It exists with our help. This is why I always point out the dreadful, almost mystically evil, significance which Marxist ideology has in our country. It is by accepting this ideology, which holds our souls in its claws, that we are buttressing the régime. We are, it would seem, entirely without rights. No one pays any attention to us; every decision of internal or external policy is apparently taken without our participation. Yet at the same time we are supporting the totalitarian régime every day and by all our efforts—which means that we are guilty for what it does. That is our sin, and we must bear responsibility for it and repent for it.

—Do you think that there is such a concept as collective guilt of a whole nation?

SOLZHENITSYN: You know, however strange it may seem, empirically, in the memory of entire generations and nations, such concepts are indeed formed. I may mention as a gratifying example that in one of the two Germanys there was, and still is, evidence of a wave of remorse. There is this feeling in Western Germany that Germany has committed a sin and that it was a collective sin of the entire nation.

Or—think about the memory which colonisers have left behind in the minds of the colonial peoples. Of course, these peoples think of the entire nation as guilty of colonialism, even though it is not every Englishman or Frenchman that has been a coloniser. But this is the impression that has been left behind.

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Or take the well-known story about how the British in Austria, after the War had already ended, handed over some one-and-a-half million people to the Soviet Union, knowing that they would be ruthlessly punished there—people who knew that what awaited them was death, and who begged with tears not to be handed over.[3] There were old men among them, women and children, people of all ages, people who knew that they had to expect death or exile, but the British military command handed them over without mercy. I heard these stories from many people when I was still in the Archipelago, and they always said the same thing: the British betrayed us. They did not say that it was done by this or that major or colonel, it was always "the British betrayed us."

Britain is not a totalitarian country. In Britain democracy is well established; there is the right to demand explanations, to ask questions; and yet thirty years have passed and it is only now that, with great difficulty, this secret is being unearthed. Well, then, if the citizens of a totalitarian State are responsible for the actions of their governments, are the citizens of the most free, the most democratic parliamentary State not equally responsible? Yes, it may be that the orders were given by Churchill, that a certain number of senior officers carried them out; but public opinion did not prevent it, did not want to take the matter up, did not ask for explanations. And watching it all happening, we do get the feeling that the *entire* British nation has committed a sin because it has not repented of it, has not investigated it, has not renounced it, has not tried to put it right.

However, these are all extraneous issues. In fact, in our collection of essays we have set ourselves the task of searching for our own Russian mistakes, searching for our own sins, and seeking to rectify them. Surprisingly, it is this which has created bitterness—perhaps in connection with our ultimate aim, that of national regeneration, which, in the sense that we understand the word "nation", we consider to be absolutely necessary, something to which every nation is entitled.

—In your essay on the Russian intelligentsia you point to the need for moral revolution. In what practical way can such a moral revolution manifest itself?

SOLZHENITSYN: I would put it perhaps like this: generally speaking, it is a new phenomenon which has yet to be fully investigated, which has perhaps never yet fully materialised, but which is now confronting the entire world. I believe that the era of physical revolutions must end. That is, we

[3] For an account of this, see Nicholas Bethell's recent book *The Last Secret* (André Deutsch, 1974).

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must make every effort to ensure that physical revolutions are ended. I shall try to demonstrate the distinction between these different terms. We may formulate it in this way: physical revolution means "let's kill others and then we shall certainly obtain justice." Moral revolution means "sacrifice yourself, and then, perhaps, justice will be established." Physical revolution means "let us kill others, but you may also be killed yourself." Moral revolution means "put yourself in a position where you yourself might be killed but don't kill others."

Don't misunderstand me—moral revolution is not simply a revolution of morals, it is a revolution within society, it is a revolutionary change of the social system, only not by physical but by spiritual methods. Someone, sometime, has to break out of the vicious circle of "let's have another uprising, let's overthrow somebody once again, and then nobody will ever overthrow anyone else again and everything will be fine." This has happened scores of times, hundreds of times in world history, and it is quite obvious that physical revolutions have never provided a solution and have never fulfilled their promises.

Among us in the Soviet Union moral revolution, so it seems to me, is taking on quite concrete forms precisely because of the fact that ideology, in our country, has been woven into the State structure—it is precisely because of this that conditions in our country are particularly favourable to a moral revolution. In so far as the State system is founded on ideology, it means that all we have to do is to renounce the ideology, stop supporting it, and the State system will collapse by itself—it has nothing to hold on to but ideology, it will transform itself, become different. In my essay *Live Not by the Lie*, which was prepared before my expulsion and published on the day I was expelled, I appealed to my fellow citizens to do just this and no more: to stop supporting the lie, within the limits in which they recognise the lie.[4] Some recognise it more clearly, others less so. But the main thing is—never to act against your conscience, not to put your signature on documents you do not believe in, not to vote for those who you think should not be elected, not to approve decisions, not to applaud, not to pass on lies, not to broadcast them, not to write them, not to put them down on paper, not to pretend. . . . Let us not talk about millions, let us begin with tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands of people, first of all with the intelligentsia. The ordinary people are less guilty of this, they don't have to lie so much, while the intelligentsia is lying incessantly, particularly the cultural intelligentsia but the technical intelligentsia does it also. It is on these lies that all our injustices are founded. And yet we constantly denounce the totalitarian régime! If we reject these lies—and for everyone it is a moral not a political decision—if we take this moral step, yes, it will have incalculable consequences for our social order. We, the authors of this collection of essays, we are all trying to remove discussion from this narrow political plane, from this impoverished plane of "Left" and "Right", to a moral plane.

—Speaking of Russia's future, where do you see the source of these forces which would make one hope for the possibility of a spiritual regeneration?

SOLZHENITSYN: If we look for those moral guidelines which alone can liberate us, we can fortunately also find the spiritual forces within our people. It is something to wonder at, and something one cannot stop wondering at, because all the efforts of the régime during the last 55 years have been directed towards crippling our souls, towards suppressing our spiritual life. And yet it is precisely here that we have, almost miraculously, retained spiritual reserves, and it is precisely in this field that the most extraordinary things are happening.

Let me give you an example. Religion in our country has spread much more widely, and its roots are much deeper here than in the West where nobody has tried to obstruct religion, where it has been entirely free. I am counting on this spiritual strength of our people, I am counting on those forces which are born out of suffering. Individuals have suffered, but the entire nation has suffered too, and out of these sufferings a deep spiritual feeling has been born, which can help us to find a way out of our outwardly difficult situation.

Igor Shafarevich, in the final essay published in the collection—the last of his three essays—ends it and the entire collection with these words: "During the past half-century we have acquired experience which no one else in the whole world possesses." If, as in fairy-tale images, as in ancient legend, to acquire supernatural strength one must go through death, then we can say that Russia has passed through death and can now hear the voice of God.

[4] For the full text see: Leopold Labedz (ed.), *Solzhenitsyn: A Documentary Record*, (Penguin Books, 1974), pp. 375–79.

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The Real Wilfred

Owen's Life & Legends—By PHILIP LARKIN

A WRITER'S REPUTATION is twofold: what we think of his work, and what we think of him. What's more, we expect the two halves to relate: if they don't, then one or other of our opinions alters until they do. When a writer dies young, however, this double process of critical and biographical assessment is dislocated. The work is published, and will not be added to, and we start making up our minds about it: the life, on the other hand, is guarded by widow, family, friends, trustees, and fifty years may go by before a total picture is presented. This is not to say that we have no picture in the meantime: nearly always we have, but it is put out by precisely the people (widow, family, etc.) who are standing in the way of complete documentation. There may be good human reasons for this, and in any case the interim picture will be far from false, but it will almost certainly require ultimate modification, which (again almost certainly) will come as something of a shock. It is doubtful whether the process has been fully worked out in the case of Rupert Brooke, or even Edward Thomas. Jon Stallworthy's present book shows it happening in the case of Wilfred Owen.

Mr Stallworthy takes over what might be called the Wilfred Owen story at a particularly interesting point. When his poems, or a selection of them, first appeared in 1920, two years after his death, their editor, Siegfried Sassoon, made a bold and unusual bid: Owen should not have a Life:

> All that was strongest in Wilfred Owen survives in his poems; any superficial impressions of his personality, any records of his conversation, behaviour, or appearance, would be irrelevant and unseemly.

It would be interesting to know whose idea this was, and why it was propounded. As a result, Owen's principal poems existed for some ten years in a vacuum, as if they were utterances of The Spirit of the Pities in some updated *The Dynasts*. Their reputation was slow to grow (it is hardly credible that Owen is not represented in even the second (1953) edition of *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, for instance), but once the 2,250 copies of the first edition had been sold it was clear that a more substantial collection, with a memoir, was needed, and this was undertaken by Edmund Blunden.

Blunden's memoir, published in 1931, was produced with the full consent and cooperation of Owen's family (which really meant his mother, as we shall see), and consequently with access to a great many of his letters and papers. The portrait it draws is of a Keats-loving and poetically-dedicated youth, sometimes in delicate health, caught up in the holocaust of a European war; the greater part of it concentrates on Owen's army experiences from the time he first went to France with the Manchester Regiment at the beginning of 1917. Many of the now-familiar passages from the then-unpublished letters were included, together with the unforgettable account of Owen's death by his brother officer, Lieutenant Foulkes, who saw him moving among his men on the banks of the Sambre Canal that morning, encouraging them in their work under the heavy fire that a few minutes later killed him. It is a sober and responsible narrative as far as it goes, and the image of Owen it propounds is well suited to the poems:

> He was one of those destined beings who, without pride of self (the words of Shelley will never be excelled), "See, as from a tower, the end of all." Outwardly, he was quiet, unobtrusive, full of good sense; inwardly, he could not help regarding the world with the dignity of a seer.

Blunden never met Owen, but he tried to give some idea of what Owen was like by printing reminiscences of two people who had known him when he was convalescing at Craiglockhart War Hospital, near Edinburgh. One was Mrs Mary Gray, a member of a group that entertained convalescent officers, and the other Mr Frank

[1] *Wilfred Owen*. By JON STALLWORTHY. Oxford University Press and Chatto & Windus, £6.75.

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Nicholson, Librarian of the University of Edinburgh, who met Owen at the Grays' house and subsequently began (at Owen's request) to teach him German. Both insist on Owen's awareness of the suffering the war had produced, Mrs Gray in particular emphasising his sensitivity and sympathy (perhaps rather amusingly in view of Owen's comment to his mother that his new friend Sassoon was "so restful . . . after Mrs Gray who gushes all over me").

HERE FOR SOME THIRTY YEARS Owen's life rested. To the reader of the poems, conscious of their unique element of visionary compassion, he seemed a genius of a high and extraordinary nature. To endure the Great War, and not only to endure it but to accept it in a way that made possible a mature artistic expression of it, while at the same time both passionately abhorring its horrors and winning the Military Cross—all this argued a personality at once robust and selfless, a spiritual nature both strong and deep. Above all, his modesty, his deference to literary figures destined to seem his inferior, gave him affinity with the great negative capabilities; if Hardy or even Shakespeare had been killed in action at 25, this, we felt, is how they would have been remembered.

In the Sixties, however, the well-fenced area of Owen studies was progressively flooded by a succession of volumes that swept away both Blunden's pard-like spirit and Sassoon's voice and nothing more. These were the three parts of Owen's younger brother Harold's memoirs *Journey from Obscurity* (1963–65), and the *Collected Letters* of Owen himself, ably edited by John Bell with the help of Harold Owen, that appeared in 1967. These substantial works—*Journey from Obscurity* runs to over 800 pages, and the *Letters* to nearly 600, not counting editorial apparatus—changed the situation radically. From knowing very little about Owen, we suddenly came to know a great deal. If up till then he had seemed almost a spirit called into being by the Great War's unprecedented beastliness to assert compassion and humanity, he was now an ordinary human being whose "conversation, behaviour [and] appearance" were if anything over-documented.

As Owen's next biographer, therefore—and indeed one might say his first biographer—Stallworthy's principal duty was to sort out this new material, put it into order, and calculate the effect it had on Owen's image as perpetuated by Blunden (minor contributions by Sassoon in 1945 and Osbert Sitwell in 1950 had necessitated no significant amendments). This task was important for several reasons. First, and astonishingly enough, the new material was hard reading. Harold Owen was a roundabout and sometimes repetitive writer, and Owen's letters, not to put too fine a point on it, were often simply dull. Secondly, however much new information was represented, it still needed to be sifted impartially on the grounds that it was supplied either by the family or by Owen himself. And thirdly, for the first time we were told that there was an Owen problem. In the final pages of his final volume Harold Owen describes how their mother devoted herself to the perpetuation of Wilfred's memory; how she kept everything he wrote or owned (even his revolver, still loaded, was found after her death); how it was she who dealt with Sassoon and Edith Sitwell, and later with Blunden, when editions and memoirs were in progress. He also makes it clear that he was not happy about this:

> I knew without doubt that the real Wilfred had diverged very far from my mother's conception of *her* Wilfred. . . . She had built for herself an inviolable image—an image not only in the likeness of what she thought he was but one which she in her simple way so passionately wished him to be. . . .

Was Mrs Owen's Wilfred, then, Blunden's Wilfred? Was either the the real Wilfred? Or was the real Wilfred simply Harold's Wilfred?

STALLWORTHY HAS PERFORMED the first of his responsibilities well. Although he sees his work as a portrait of Owen as artist, to complement the portrait in the *Letters* of Owen as eldest son and Harold Owen's portrait of Owen as elder brother, it is primarily a seamless paraphrase (interspersed with direct quotation) of his two main sources. His tone is alert, unprejudiced and vivid. Of the forty illustrations, I have noticed less than half in previous volumes, and he has had the happy idea of reproducing Owen's original manuscript where a poem needs to be cited (this alone gives the book a unique value). He has followed up references with rewarding thoroughness, and his study of Owen's own library (now preserved at Oxford) has revealed some interesting parallels of thought and phrase.

Where his book is less satisfactory is in its lack of emphases and its general suspension of judgment on the kind of person we now know Owen to have been, and how this new knowledge relates to his work. The evidence is there, but perhaps through the very scrupulousness that ensures its accurate presentation Stallworthy refrains from interpreting it. For instance, it is now quite clear that the fundamental biographic fact about Owen is that he was his mother's boy: his family situation was sufficiently like that of D. H. Lawrence for the comparison to be made.

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ROUTLEDGE

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Differences in his parents' temperaments, exacerbated by poverty (and the Welsh, musical, humorous, somewhat histrionic Tom Owen is an even more sympathetic figure than Arthur Lawrence), seem to have caused a split in the family, Tom Owen siding with the second son Harold and Colin, the youngest, against Susan Owen and Wilfred and the daughter Mary. Indeed Harold Owen's motive in writing his book (subtitled "Memoirs of the Owen Family") was partly to heal this split, to reclaim Wilfred from their mother, and to re-establish Tom Owen and indeed himself as significant figures in Wilfred's upbringing. Mrs Owen was extremely ambitious for her son (she kept a lock of his hair marked "The hair of Sir Wilfred Edward Salter-Owen at the age of 11½ months"—Salter was her maiden name), and this ambition was transferred to Wilfred by a sort of psychological osmosis. According to Harold, Wilfred was over-adult as a boy, and as an adolescent veered from "too high spirits" to depression and attacks of bad temper in which he was inclined to lecture the whole family furiously for their failure to attain proper standards. Harold ascribes this to ever-present domestic stress and to self-dissatisfaction. In fact Wilfred seems to have made a fair contribution to such stress. His attitude to Harold was consistently discouraging. When the latter was going to sea at 15 (one ambitious son in the house was enough, and Harold's wishes to study art were not taken seriously), he called to say goodbye to Wilfred, who was in bed, and who concluded the interview by calling through the closing door

> to remind me how atrocious my English still was, and barked at me that if—when we met again—he found that I had the slightest trace of a Liverpool accent, he would disown relationship for ever.

Was he being funny? A better occasion could have been found. A less ambiguous incident concerns a time when Wilfred was acting as unofficial tutor to Harold:

> When I showed him my efforts, he would take a fiendish delight in verbally tearing them to pieces, putting on all the time a loud hooting laughter quite unnatural to him; but he enjoyed this part of it all very much and he long afterwards told me he always set the exercises for me just too high so that he could enjoy the pleasures of his destructive criticism.

IT IS NOT SURPRISING that Owen, sealed within his mother's love and his own ambition, should have found it difficult to come to terms with the world through the usual channels of friendship, love and work. His formal education ceased when he was eighteen, but although the family could not possibly support him he took care not to commit himself to conventional employment. For over a year he was unpaid lay assistant to the Vicar of Dunsden, and when this appointment came to a rather mysterious end he went to France as an English teacher, at first at a Berlitz School, and later (when the Berlitz routine had proved too heavy) as a tutor in private families. In a letter to his father he said:

> If I have shirked the idea of Shop, or Office, or Elementary School, it is only because I am more clear-sighted than another; and see that once fixed in a low-level Rut one is ever-after straightened [sic] there;—straightened intellectually and socially as well as financially.

The trouble with Owen's high standards (that his family failed to achieve) was that he had difficulty in reaching them himself. "A rather ordinary young man, perceptibly provincial," was Sassoon's first impression of him, and the *Letters* tend to bear this out. Nor was he especially clever. His matriculation was without honours (this sent him to bed for the day), and although the thought of a university degree was constantly in his mind his attempts in that direction suggest that he would have found it much more difficult than would Lawrence ("a great passer of examinations", as Huxley called him). Even his aspirations towards poetry achieved nothing that could be set up tangibly as something attempted and accomplished. All this he recognised: it lay at the root of his depression. "I must have help," he told Harold once, "and I just can't get it."

More remarkable was his apparent inability to form a significant relation with anyone outside the family—even the poetry-writing Leslie Gunston was a cousin—until he met Sassoon in 1917. "The Lone Wolf" was his domestic nickname: in November 1914 he wrote to his mother from Bordeaux, where he was teaching:

> I begin to suffer a hunger for Intimity. At bottom, it is that I ought to be in love and am not. Though I have abundance of acquaintance, and a thousand times more friends here than in England, (since out of the Family, I have not one in England) I lack any touch of tenderness.

There is a terrible irony in Owen's telling his mother that he ought to be in love and is not. For what the *Letters* cry out on nearly every page is that it was she who magnetised his love, his intimacy, his tenderness. This is demonstrated not so much by the fact that, of the 673 Owen letters that survive, 631 are to her: he could have written another six hundred letters to recipients who did not keep them. Even the fact that they are addressed, not to "Dear Mother and Dad" as they so well might have been, but to "Dearest Mother", "My own Mother", "My dear, dear Mother" could conceivably be explained as a

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childish survival. It is their frequency, their atmosphere of being written to someone who understands and appreciates everything, and above all their explicit declarations that drive the point home. Letters signed "Mother's Son", "Your dear-loving Child", and similar extravagances may contain assurances such as

> Still, I am quite wretched tonight, missing you much. Oh so much!
> Taking the world as it really is, not everybody of my years can boast (or as many would say, confess) that their Mother is absolute in their affections. But I believe it will always be so with me, always.

That was written not in adolescence, but at the age of twenty-five, within three months of his death. A year earlier he had written

> I have *only once* since getting through the Barrage at Feyet felt such exultation. . . . The "only once" was when I saw you gliding up to me, veiled in azure, at the Caledonian Hotel. I thought you looked very very beautiful. . . .

One is reminded of Lawrence's remark reported by Jessie Chambers: "I've *loved* her, like a lover. That's why I could never love you."

Only there was no "you." "All women, without exception, *annoy* me," he wrote to his mother in February 1914, and it is clear that this was something on which he and Harold did not agree. "Of course you sailors are all heterosexual by nature," Wilfred told him, and one of their more serious quarrels arose from a naive yet cold-blooded attempt on his part to supply Harold with a woman when the latter visited him in camp. One would like to know more of the invitation to Canada from the mother of his pupils, Mme Léger, in August 1914 ("I am conscious that she has a considerable liking for me"), but no doubt Mme Léger would ultimately have agreed with Mrs Gray that "personal experience and individual development can hardly be said to have existed for him." Occasionally in his letters to his mother he hints at temptations ("If you knew what hands have been laid on my arm, in the night, along the Bordeaux streets"), but in fact there is no evidence that Owen ever achieved "Intimity" with a woman.

INEVITABLY IT HAS BEEN ASKED whether he was homosexual. Stallworthy, while acknowledging the numerous references to male beauty in the early poems (and bringing to our notice one that begins "It was a navy boy, so prim, so trim"), suggests that Owen's trouble was no more than that his mother had instilled into him the simple (and at that time common)

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equation "women=unclean=bad", which presumably implied "men=clean=good", but which he might have outgrown as his experience widened. Harold Owen insists that Wilfred was both attractive to women and attracted by them: "It was Wilfred himself who would not allow any attraction to develop." This, he says, was because Wilfred's devotion to poetry was religious in its fervour, and demanded that he be celibate. Neither mentions the description of Owen as "an idealistic homosexual with a religious background" that Robert Graves added to the American edition of *Goodbye to All That*, and then cut out at Harold Owen's request.

Admittedly there is no evidence of any practice in this direction, either, on Owen's part, but it cannot be ignored that in the last year of his life he was moving in homosexual society. Sassoon introduced him to Robert Ross, whom he met in November 1917; Ross, who was reputed to be "the first boy Oscar ever had", entertained him to luncheon on two successive days, and in May 1918 Owen was staying in the flat above Ross's in Half Moon Street. In early 1918, too, he is in a Scarborough oyster-bar with "a new friend . . . Philip Bainbrigge"; Stallworthy illuminatingly refers us to a mention of Bainbrigge in Timothy d'Arch Smith's *Love in Earnest* (1970), where he appears as the author of an "obscene dialogue in Latin between two schoolboys", and a verse play, *Achilles in Scyros*, an extract from which leaves no doubt as to its character. The latter work was dedicated to C. K. Scott-Moncrieff, the later translator of Proust, whom Owen met in January 1918 in the company of Eddie Marsh, and who in May was trying to get Owen a post as instructor to a cadet battalion. It is only natural to wonder how long, in such company, any idealistic homosexual would have remained idealistic.

BUT THEN THE LAST YEAR, or eighteen months, of Owen's life was markedly different from the rest, although Stallworthy does not take this view: "he dispels the notion", as the blurb says, "that the shock of the trenches produced a poet of instant maturity." At any rate it can be said that Owen's commitment to his subject—the suffering of men in battle—was slow. Despite Blunden's claim (repeated by Sitwell) that Owen did not return to England and volunteer in August 1914 because of the terms of his "tutorial engagement", we find him ditching the importunate Mme Léger in October 1914, and taking up a fresh post in December that he held till the following summer. During this time his attitude to the war was one of detachment:

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> I feel my own life all the more precious and more dear in the presence of this deflowering of Europe. While it is true that the guns will effect a little useful weeding, I am furious with chagrin to think that the Minds which were to have excelled the civilisation of ten thousand years, are being annihilated. . . .

Nor was his sympathy with the British Expeditionary Force as keen as might have been expected:

> I regret the mortality of the English regulars less than that of the French, Belgian, or even Russian or German armies: because the former are all Tommy Atkins, poor fellows, while the continental armies are inclusive of the finest brains and temperaments of the land.

As late as August 1915 he is toying with the notion of being "a Munitions Worker at Birmingham, earning £5 a week." Or "Can't Uncle be more precise about 'Good job in War Office'?" Or "I seriously should like to join the Italian Cavalry; for reasons both aesthetic and practical." It would be tempting to say that he had no real appreciation of the nature of the war if it were not for a letter to Harold Owen on 23 September 1914 recounting at length the wounds of men he had seen in a French hospital. This letter ("I deliberately tell you all this to educate you to the actualities of the war") foreshadows Owen's later habit of carrying photographs of war casualties for production on appropriate occasions, but it is also one more instance of his repressive attitude towards his brother, who at the time was sailing in submarine-patrolled waters and unlikely to relish such education.

None the less his first spell in the line (January to May, 1917: his second was from the end of September, 1918, to his death at the beginning of November) was a terrific shock. It takes an effort today to realise how completely unprepared, imaginatively, the men of 1914 and 1915 were for the horrors that awaited them: literature had said nothing of the "hideous landscapes, vile noises . . . everything unnatural, broken, blasted" that was the Western Front, and this probably accounts for Owen's occasional sarcasms ("poets' tearful fooling"; "Above all I am not concerned with Poetry") at conventional literature, suggesting that he felt he had been taken in. Looking at the thirty or so letters dating from this time one cannot help but notice the extent to which he shares his sense of outrage with his next of kin:

> I can see no excuse for deceiving you about these last 4 days. I have suffered seventh hell.
> I have not been at the front.
> I have been in front of it.
> I held an advanced post, that is, a "dug-out" in the middle of No Man's Land.
> We have a march of 3 miles over shelled road then nearly 3 along a flooded trench [etc.]. . . .

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While this passage, and the many that match it, are no doubt free from exaggeration, they contrast markedly with the tradition that the imaginations of wives or mothers should not be needlessly harrowed. When Lieutenant Kenneth Garnett wrote,[2] after a year's war, to his mother in November 1915:

> Do you remember the fort at Sea View near the Point that the Curwens and I once built? This game is just like that, only more people are playing at it and we don't get into a row for getting our clothes messy. . . .

he was in all probability fooling nobody, but at least he was trying. A more usual tone was that of Christopher Isherwood's father, writing to his wife in November 1914:[3]

> I can't think that Jackson had the impudence to tell you that I exposed myself unnecessarily. It was an absolute lie. I am most cautious. Of course one has to lead the men forward and to take risks in doing so, but I never do anything unnecessary or foolish, I can promise you that, and I have got at the back of my mind the determination to get back to see you again.

Owen's letters are not hysterical; they are not even especially self-pitying. They are simply instinct with an "awful *distaste*", as one of his aunts acutely though rather comically put it, for the whole business, a horror that men should suffer so, that he should suffer so, and he has no compunction about letting his mother know it. At the same time, they do not really prepare us for the poems. There are few, if any, traces of the feeling of "Futility" or "Greater Love." Just once or twice at the end it shows through:

> I came out in order to help these boys—directly by leading them as well as an officer can; indirectly, by watching their sufferings that I may speak of them as well as a pleader can. I have done the first.

TO READ STALLWORTHY'S BOOK, and to go back to the two works of which it is so largely an amalgam, prompts the conclusion that a number of elements in Owen's life and character, at first submerged or unresolved, were precipitated by the catalyst of trench warfare into realisation or near-realisation. This precipitation in some cases was so radical as to give the effect of total reversal. From being indifferent to the war, and to the troops fighting it, he became deeply concerned. From being an unimpressive and derivative poet, he became an original and unforgettable one. From lacking "any touch of tenderness" he became the spokesman of a deep and unaffected compassion. From being an unlikeable youth he became a likeable and admirable man.

One cannot blame Stallworthy for failing to solve this complex problem; one can, perhaps, regret his failure to recognise it. "All shaped him for his subject," he maintains, implying a smooth and harmonious development, but much as one sympathises with his impatience at the "instant maturity" legend it remains a convenient shorthand for the evidence as we have it. It would be easy to guess: to say that service with the Manchesters gave Owen his first experience of belonging in a common enterprise and put the "Lone Wolf" to flight for ever; to say that his encounter with Sassoon and his poems showed him how poetry could and must deal with things as they were and should not be; to say that his association with homosexuals introduced him to an emotional climate that at the time he found liberating and relevant; and to say, finally, that the three experiences were connected. But even if there could be evidence for such hypotheses, we have not got it.

Whether such considerations are the key to the real Wilfred or not, it is certain that the two-dimensional figure of Blunden's memoir is gone for good. In its place we must accept a much more complicated, and even contradictory, personality: commonplace yet uniquely gifted, compassionate yet insensitive, complacent yet diffident, characterised by the unnatural maturity of the mother-dominated yet retaining the eagerness and hilarity of extreme youth. "This union of opposites was, I fancy, characteristic of his whole personality," as Frank Nicholson wrote, "and may perhaps explain his power of inspiring affection in men and women alike." Affection is not, on the whole, what one feels for the subject of Stallworthy's narrative; even if we discount half of Harold Owen's anecdotes as the settling of a family feud, there is enough left to suggest that Wilfred Owen was on occasion a rather disagreeable young man, and far from the selfless paragon of Mrs Gray's reminiscence.

DOES THIS NEW VIEW of Owen affect our opinion of the poems? At first one thinks not. They are still there, an eternally resonant monument to one of the most dreadful corners of history. Yet in retrospect two casual sentences from a letter Robert Graves wrote to Owen seem increasingly significant:

> For God's sake cheer up and write more optimistically—The war's not ended yet but a poet should have a spirit above wars—

[2] John Laffin, ed., *Letters from the Front* (1973), p.7.
[3] Christopher Isherwood, *Kathleen and Frank* (1971), p. 303.

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It is as if Graves guessed intuitively that for Owen the war was not an impersonal calamity to be got rid of as soon as possible, but a private involvement, something that seemed part of his isolation, his frustrated ambitions in poetry, his sexual hang-ups. This is not to accuse Owen of insincerity. Lines such as "The Poetry is in the pity" and "The eternal reciprocity of tears" will never lose their enormous impact that is utterly free from affectation. It is just that they no longer seem like utterances of The Spirit of the Pities. Somewhere behind them was a human problem that even after fifty years we are a long way from understanding.

The "Ultra" Secret

"Enigma" in the War—By CONSTANTINE FITZGIBBON

THERE IS A STORY, apocryphal no doubt, about an ageing cardinal, dining at the table of contemporaries of the highest Italian nobility. One of the younger, and perhaps more foolish, guests asked this Prince of the Church whether as a young priest long ago he had not found a certain embarrassment in some of the confessions he had had to hear and, even more, in the questions he had had to ask of young women who wished to confess sins of a sexual nature. The old bishop, in an attempt to explain why a priest in his side of the confessional is beyond such embarrassment, told the story of the first such confession he had ever heard. He added that he had advised the countess or duchess involved not to inform her husband that their first-born, the son and heir, was almost certainly a bastard. The whole long table had fallen silent, and, at its far end, their hostess fainted away. At the other end the eldest son and heir threw down his napkin: under the eyes of his younger brothers and their wives, he left the room.

How long is the secrecy of a secret? That of a state secret is usually very short—British administrative legislation now says 30 years, though this rule is not observed in either direction, by ex-Cabinet Ministers on the one hand or on the other by historians dealing with certain activities of those Ministers before they became ex. The Byzantines, on the other hand, kept "Greek Fire" secret for a very long time, indeed for the duration of their Empire which it helped greatly to protect against Arab, Russian and Turkish assault almost for a millennium, and the secret of which is still not finally resolved to everyone's satisfaction today.

Secret intelligence in our century seems to be far more vulnerable. It is not here a matter so much of espionage, of "James Bondery", for Ian Fleming, his predecessors and successors, gave away almost no secrets of any use to any enemy. What counts is the main source of military and diplomatic intelligence that espionage, reconnaissance, and so on help to conceal by accepting the publicity and rewards which the state willingly gives to the practitioners of those dangerous crafts. Real intelligence, which made an enormous contribution to the winning of the First and Second World Wars, and is indubitably involved both in the present, cold Third World War and in preparation against the horrors of a hot, nuclear Fourth World War, is concerned primarily with cipher breaking, that is to say with knowledge of what the enemy's (or future enemy's) strategic and tactical plans are *before* he puts these into operation. The methods of collection, evaluation, and application of intelligence so gathered are truly secret. With technological change, such as the invention of new cipher machines and of computers, the first element in this triple operation becomes less important: the other two, and ultimately more important, elements of this complex operation do not. In order to estimate the strategic value to a potential enemy of Group Captain Winterbotham's recently published book,[1] it is necessary to explain some of the background.

WHILE AMERICA WAS STILL NEUTRAL in 1916 and 1917, the British began to leak their own cipher-breaking secrets, at least some of the more superficial ones, to the Americans, in particular to a Mr Edward Bell of the United States Embassy in London. This intelligence operation, which almost certainly "won" the U-boat battle in the Atlantic, was directed by Admiral Hall from Room 40 (a much larger complex than its name implies) at the Admiralty. The files of Room 40 are still unavailable, and Admiral Hall's activities were never revealed by himself but only in part by his biographer, Admiral James, many years

[1] *The Ultra Secret*. By F. W. WINTERBOTHAM. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £3.25.

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later.[2] By then another World War had come and gone, computers been created and become effective, and cipher-breaking in its technical sense utterly different. Meanwhile Room 40, by breaking the so-called Zimmermann Telegram (which postulated unrestricted U-boat warfare against American shipping, and hoped for the involvement of both Mexico and Japan in war against the U.S.A. should America object), had won a major, perhaps the major, strategic and diplomatic victory of the Western Allies. America entered the war. Had Mr Bell and Ambassador Page not been, in part, indoctrinated into and certainly convinced of the reliability of Room 40, it would have been even more difficult to persuade President Wilson that he could no longer afford to be "too proud to fight." On the other hand the delicacy of this intelligence was intense. American security was as leaky as the sieve of the Jumblies. Had the Germans suspected that Admiral Hall was reading their diplomatic and naval ciphers (while the French were reading their land ones) they would have changed these, and not only the Atlantic battle but the whole War might well have been lost. Cipher-breaking is to security as *A* is to *B*. This is why Admiral Hall took his secrets to the grave.

It was, however, necessary further to enlighten the Americans once they were an "associated power," though never an ally, in the war against the Central Powers.

There was in embryonic form an American intelligence service. It contained a cipher-breaking unit, almost entirely created by Herbert O. Yardley, a cryptanalyst of distinction. His dramatically named BLACK CHAMBER became part of U.S. intelligence called, in 1918, M.I.8.[3] It seems that the British and French gave him some, but not much, information about their methods. It is probable (at least to this writer) that they remained very reticent about European matters, less so about Mexican, Japanese and other Asian ciphers. In any event the Black Chamber was wound up in 1929, when Henry L. Stimson became Secretary of State, with the curious if attractive comment that "gentlemen do not read one another's mail." Yardley was out of work, short of money, and wrote his memoirs, first serialised in *The Saturday Evening Post*. The Jumblies had sailed away again in their sieve.

WHEN GENERAL HIDEKI TOJO formed his Japanese war-time government in 1941 one of his first acts was to send for his Chief of Intelligence, draw that man's attention to Herbert Yardley's book which he had read, and demand assurance that such a trick could never again be played by American intelligence against the Japanese. He received this assurance, which was incorrect.[4] The Americans, with some (but not much) British assistance, had already broken many top Japanese ciphers. To this intelligence operation they once again gave an exaggeratedly melodramatic name, MAGIC. But the Americans of 1941 lacked the expertise to carry out the second and third parts of so major an intelligence operation, for had they done so it is unlikely that almost the entire U.S. Navy would have been sitting like a row of ducks in Pearl Harbour on 7 December 1941. The hostess fainted: the heir hurried from the room. A new U.S. Navy was built with amazing speed and power while Anglo-American intelligence at the highest level rapidly became almost entirely unified. It received the far less melodramatic British name of ULTRA. It was supposed to be entirely secret, and forever. One of its principal administrators was a Royal Air Force Officer named Winterbotham, to whom many of us, British and American, swore a sort of oath never to divulge what we knew, indeed never to use the word ULTRA or give any indication of its existence, past, present or future, or the location of a dreary place called Bletchley where most of us had worked at one time or another during the Second World War if engaged in this sort of *I*, or of the German *Enigma* machine, which we were reading or having read to us.

The *Enigma* machine can be roughly described as a form of typewriter, which automatically enciphers signals which can then, in theory, only be deciphered by another *Enigma* machine. The method of en- and decipherment can be speedily changed. It was believed by the Germans, who invented it about 1926, to be an unbreakable system. Precisely how and when it fell into foreign hands is not clear. According to Michel

[2] Admiral Sir William James, *The Eyes of the Navy* (London, 1955).
[3] Herbert O. Yardley, *The Black Chamber* (London, 1931).
[4] David Kahn, *The Code-breakers*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson (London, 1973).

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Garder (*La Guerre Secrète*, Plon, 1957) and to Gustave Bertrand (*Enigma*, Plon, 1973) the French had it before the War of 1939, but failed to exploit it. The British seem to have acquired it, or knowledge of its construction, from the Poles or the French (or from both) and to have made it operational early in the spring of 1940. So far as I know, the Soviets had no knowledge of *Enigma* from any source, at least during the Second World War.

THIS LENGTHY PREAMBLE WILL, I hope, make it clear why it is so difficult to review this book. Not that it is hard to do so from a literary point of view. It is written in a clumsy prose, bureaucratic in the pejorative sense, comparable more to that of a minor urban district councillor than to that of a senior staff officer trained to be both brief and above all unambiguous. The proofs have been read with deplorable sloppiness, names frequently mis-spelt or given alternative spellings, for which one must blame both the author and the publisher. The material seems to have been poured in, and no doubt at the suggestion of others occasionally ladled out again, regardless of shape and occasionally of simple continuity either in time or theme. As a literary work, then, a failure, with only one redeeming quality: it is short, a mere 191 pages.

As a historian I hesitate almost entirely to criticise this work, in part because I intend to keep my promise not to divulge secret knowledge acquired as an intelligence officer during the Second World War, in part because the facts are far from clear and some of the clarification offered by *The Ultra Secret* is misleading. Certainly the author's judgment of character among the very senior officers who read, and acted on, ULTRA is frequently at fault. I myself was one of the very few officers at 12th U.S. Army Group Hq. in the spring and summer of 1944 who read ULTRA. It was then and there primarily a matter of German Order of Battle, and I was responsible for that section of General Bradley's tactical G-2. I briefed my Commanding General at least twice a day, usually more frequently when the battle became fluid. I was in constant touch with the British and with Field Marshal Montgomery's army group both before and after our own was operational early in August. The suggestion, repeated more than once, that senior G.o.C.s, and Montgomery in particular did not like ULTRA because it deprived them of their glory or, a meaner suggestion, because they felt that persons even senior to themselves might be looking over their shoulder, verges on slander. Montgomery and his intelligence staff, led in Africa and in Europe by Brigadier E. T. Williams, made the fullest possible use of ULTRA. This they concealed, with proper

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discretion. But it was their fighting soldiers who won the battles, not Group Captains safe abed in London or Bletchley nor even members of the intelligence staffs abroad. We helped, our help was taken and used: they fought, and died, and won.

THE FEEDING OF ALMOST RAW INTELLIGENCE to the political leaders was also not always desirable. Of course Churchill (who was fascinated by ULTRA as part of his own personal duel with Hitler) and Roosevelt had to know what the *Fuehrer*'s orders were, but these triumphs of deciphering were not infrequently passed to them without proper evaluation. The tragedy of 20 July 1944 is not unconnected with this failure.

Those Germans who had been attempting for some years to eliminate Hitler—finally by assassination—and so end the War, did not of course communicate with one another, let alone with the Western Allies, by *Enigma*. They relied on diplomatic and even on clerical channels. Thus the late Bishop Bell of Chichester was able (via Stockholm) to pass the plans of the uprising to the Foreign Office. There they seem to have been blocked by Anthony Eden. (These papers, unlike ULTRA or parts thereof are still "unavailable" and may no longer even exist.) In any event, the Foreign Office saw no reason to inform Bletchley that an event of the greatest possible political importance was under way inside Germany. Therefore Bletchley did not, or more probably could not, inform either Eisenhower or Montgomery, to whom the German C-in-C West, Field Marshal von Kluge, was supposed to surrender as soon as Hitler was reported dead. Quite the contrary. On 20 July the highest British and American field commands were agog with lack of information. Churchill himself had been fed raw ULTRA on the 20th, and on the following day was unaware who Field Marshal von Witzleben might be. "A German Badoglio?" he is said to have asked. The fault for this gross and terrible incompetence probably rests more with Eden's Foreign Office than with Bletchley; but still the final information should not have been given to Churchill, by Bletchley, unevaluated. It is possible, though certainly not probable, that a higher level of intelligence cooperation (once Colonel Stauffenberg was on the air as well as on land-lines) might have ended the War in the West on the afternoon of 20 July 1944.

The Ardennes offensive in December of that year should also have been anticipated and parried, though by then the Germans, back in Germany, were intensely security-conscious and also largely on land-lines so that the flow of ULTRA, upon which we had relied and increasingly for so long, was becoming a trickle. Nevertheless, what we had was incorrectly evaluated, though we should have learned from Arnhem in September. ULTRA had identified the II SS Panzer Corps in the Arnhem area. First Airborne Army discounted this dangerous formation, deluded by the fact that it had been "recently destroyed" in France and, undoubtedly, by our own use of cover names and cover plans. General Bradley was not misled either by this or by Montgomery's belief that his plan of three successive drops was so simple it would itself delude the Germans. Bradley had no control over the operation, but his request that the British, not one of the two American airborne divisions as originally intended, be dropped last and at Arnhem was accepted by those who made such decisions. What happened to the First British Airborne Division at Arnhem is history. When, therefore, occasional references to something quite new, the Sixth SS Panzer army, sporadically appeared on ULTRA, in late October, some of the Intelligence staffs felt considerable alarm. Again we were told that it was "cover", that the Germans were finished, that they could never mount an offensive in the West again. Here

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liaison, or understanding, was fallacious not between Bletchley and the Foreign Office, but between Bletchley and the over-confident generals at SHAEF and higher. These men, in their apparent triumph, did not listen to their Order of Battle experts. Some of us knew that whereas the Anglo-Americans might invent an entirely bogus army group in the spring of 1944, and might up to a point—though not nearly to the extent since claimed—fool the Germans with FUSAG, the Germans could not invent a bogus SS Panzer Army, since the German military did not administer the SS. Furthermore, they were so extremely discreet about this Panzer Army that it was clearly not intended to attract our attention. And the "disappearance" of certain SS formations only reinforced the concept that the Sixth SS Panzer Army was for real. Bletchley should have insisted, but failed to convince. Was it *Hubris*, based to some extent on ULTRA's past successes? In any case it was a failure of supreme political importance; for the result was that the Russians, not we, won that War.

The War in fact should have been won in the early autumn of 1944, with the Russians still almost entirely behind the Carpathians. We had become sloppy, relying too much on the deciphering of ULTRA, too little on its evaluation.

The Ultra Secret does not deal with the immense pains we went to in order to conceal ULTRA not only from our German enemies but also from our Russian allies, so likely to change sides again at almost any moment. That is in itself a fascinating story, the ruses by which we got vital intelligence to the Soviets without revealing its source. Well, now they know the source. We may assume that they have had this knowledge for some time. But now they know, more or less, how we used it. And that must be of the very greatest interest to the GRU, the KGB, or whatever the various Soviet intelligence services may nowadays have decided to call themselves.

Redundant Elegance

New Poetry—By DOUGLAS DUNN

THE SHIRES[1] struck me at first as the title of a book in which I would be likely to find an interesting sense of history. No, I was to be disappointed. What I find is a large subject "gone over" in such a way as to reduce it to the scale of the closely personal. Donald Davie has a fine notion of writing. More than anything else, it is "fineness", a deliberately courted delicacy and elegance, that defeats my prior willingness to welcome *The Shires*. Having re-read his *Collected Poems*, I was ready for this new book, and ready to like it.

What irritated me most was its chattiness—

> *Bunyan, of course. But Potton it was, or Sandy,*
> *Threaded on the Cambridge road, that showed*
> *Dissenting nineteenth-century demureness*
> *In a brick chapel.*

So begins "Bedfordshire", with its air of research lightly presented, and its gratuitous, argufying locution. Nor is that the only example. We get, for instance,

> *And yet Spaghetti Junction on the M*
> 6 *is, shall we say. . . .*

or,

> *A classical region, then? I think so, yes—*

a manner almost of the too-closely supervised seminar, in which the chairman is working too hard at trying to be relaxed, or "natural."

Davie's language is the language of education, of culture. I can see sherries at sundown, comfortable motorcars waiting on the drive. What such comfort can lead to can be seen in lines like

> *But I. A. Richards on Shelley*
> *Was an obfuscating splendour*

—the acknowledgement of a specialist.

Of the coalfields of County Durham, Davie says that they are like

> *tundra,*
> *Rain-forest,* karst, *savannah;*
> *A humanly created*
> *Topographical constant. . . .*

which is what de-humanised and trivialising Americans get up to, incapable of a little warmth. Charles Tomlinson (as we shall see later) manages the same "poeticising" frivolities, indulging in the quaint picturesque, the mutely philosophised, the inflated, which both Tomlinson and Davie get from the Black Mountain.

The Shires carries a weight of reminiscence, autobiography, and private sensation, for which

[1] *The Shires*. By DONALD DAVIE. Routledge, £2·50.

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the virtually archaeological title does not prepare us. It is a book by a motorist—"Driving up from Tees-side. . . ." Poet-as-driver is a man I find hard to accept. He's a figure who ought to get out and walk. Or just be in a place, settled. Poets should never learn how to drive.

The poem of most scale in the book is "Yorkshire." It begins with

The graces, yes—and the airs! To airs and graces
Equally the West Riding gave no houseroom
When I was young. Ballooning and mincing airs
Put on in the "down there" of England!

Essentially, the poem is about an enrichment of life achieved by hiving off from the repressive and prejudiced states of mind associated with "The North", though, being more Northern than Davie, I find the North-South antithesis not only amusing but a misleading generalisation. But it is true for Davie, who makes it autobiographical, and, from a historical rhapsody, he closes the poem with,

I have a Grace. Whether or no the Muses
Patronize me, I have a Grace in my house
And no elf-lady. Queen she is called, and Increase,
Though late-come, straitened, of a Northern
Province,

which I find beautiful both in sentiment and writing.

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RISING FROM a similar consciousness, that of reconsidering "home" and "origin", Charles Tomlinson writes—

Is it patience or anger most renders the will keen?
This is daily discontent. This is the way in.

I've no quarrel with these lines. Set in the subject of his title poem,[2] they are provocative, moving; and I appreciate the extent to which his point combines both feeling and intellect.

Yet Tomlinson's language, like Davie's, has too polished a cultural glow. Writing of his humble origin, and returns, Tomlinson seems *too* urbane; his language and feelings look as if they had rubbed uncomfortably against an unattractive subject, and been obliged to assume fastidiousness.

Whether the hard-won and well-deserved reputation that Roy Fisher's poem "City" has been accorded in recent years is of importance here, I'm unsure. Certainly, Tomlinson has a concern for "civility", a theme of Fisher's. But Tomlinson, while he possesses memory, is, I feel, further from his subject than the turbulence of the "Manscape" section of poems would have us believe. There is a certain revulsion about his response—"mannerless", "acrid." Between Tomlinson and his beginnings is too much faith in what he has now become, which prevents him getting at those beginnings, as the poems to some extent make clear.

I thought it once
Too desolate, diminished and too tame
To be the foundation for anything

he says of the single landscape his life carries with him. The dilemma is moving, and important. You will find few admissions of the fact that most of the younger writers tend to come from the sort of background not previously associated with "literature." Tomlinson suffers the handicap of his generation in that he finds it difficult to admit his own origin to himself. It's as if, like Davie, he thought it would be an unwelcome intrusion on the cultural register of a poem to talk of something so "social", so immediate, so rewarding of exploring in poems. Is it entirely insignificant that both Davie and Tomlinson have become, of all our poets, the two most obsessed with technique and the availability of American "innovations"? I think not. Not inverted snobbery, surely, in their canvassing of erudition, the aesthetic, and so on; but whatever it is, I find it tragic, the withholding of a capability from a subject matter which could have done with their skill. Yet those of us who think this way, who have faith in our nationality and in being native, can wail as long as we like about what

[2] *The Way In.* By CHARLES TOMLINSON. Oxford University Press, £1·25.

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poets' temperaments choose for them. Nothing, I suppose, will change them, though I feel at liberty to criticise. For instance, the languishing decadence of these lines from "Hokusai on the Trent":

And what painting could taste of such dragging afternoons
Whose tints are tainted, whose Fujiyamas slag?

which is an insult of someone else's art on *our* reality. Nothing more than brushstrokes, tricks of décor.

Tomlinson appears to profess that he has no obligation other than to be careful, and, in the ways of poetic technique, "accurate." Despite his poem on "Class"—typically English, this; it's about *pronunciation*—or his poem on "The Rich", Tomlinson imparts the sensation that he's classless. There is too high an estimate put on beauty, artistry, poise and imagination as virtues which help to salvage an identity from the preconceptions society generates and perpetuates. Tomlinson "got out" easier than he can get back "in." That seems evident from "Manscapes."

Art and its problems don't lend themselves to populist solutions; and the term "relevance" is a piece of canting indecency. Yet when the imagination is drawn towards the social, especially when this involves what is most personal to a writer—his beginnings—it can't expect to survive on its own terms. It has to bend a little, admit generosity, modify the centuries of privilege and exclusiveness upon which it was erected as part of the culture of some, and not of the many. Before he sought his "way in", Tomlinson built up exactly such an aesthetic barrier between himself and what he recently sought to re-enter. It proved intractable before such a consciousness.

And at the same time there is an admirable seriousness of purpose in "Manscapes", the only section of *The Way In* I've chosen, perversely, to discuss. These poems are full of an excellence of phrase, a sensuous delineation of feeling and particulars. This is also true of *The Shires*. But when both poets touch on identifiable realities, they become as "middlebrow" as Tomlinson has described Larkin. It gives me immense pleasure to say so. Tomlinson, of his new urban subjects, says:

It will need more than talk and trees
To coax a style from these disparities.

We know that. It will in fact need identification, politics, and the will to show more generous involvement than the past weight and establishment of Tomlinson's career can probably allow. But I hope not. Both Davie and Tomlinson have subjects available, through which they could blaze and scorch.

GEORGE GROSZ

by HANS HESS

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THE LANGUAGE of Jon Silkin's *The Principle of Water*[3] is hard and searching. In, for instance, his sequence "Killhope Wheel", no matter how accurately he describes episodes, or objects identifiable as part of "reality", language evokes mysteriousness rather than the plainly visual. The radical romanticism of the sequence is somehow converted to a sweeter purpose, and beauty is born out of complaint.

There is a weighty power of sound in Silkin's poems. It's more than my accent which emphasises his "r" sounds, or finds itself deepening vowels. Involved in his art of resonance, his images, what can be seen, are chosen so that an almost indefinable quality of "moral", of a point being made, is imparted as well—

> *A want of sound hangs*
> *in a drop of moisture from the wheel that*
> *turned and washed the ore.*

I can see what is being described; but it is that "want of sound" that holds the meaning of the scene, is the caption to the entire image.

By his own profession, Silkin is a "committed" poet. Recent editorials in Silkin's magazine *Stand* have been attempting to make the idea of "commitment" acceptable as something more than a purely emotional issue. Silkin himself, despite the subjects of "Killhope Wheel", or the bleak European despair of his long poem "The People", dwells on particulars so long, with such a severe and earnest concentration, that the result is virtually mystical. Both Davie and Tomlinson are presumably anxious to avoid the implications of "commitment." But their poems are much closer to the surface of life, closer to the topical, than Silkin ever gets or, probably would want to get. Clarity and directness are thought essential to any "committed" writing. Silkin works against that baleful simplification.

For instance, it could never be said that Silkin was an "elegant" poet, in anything like the way that description fits Davie or Tomlinson. A deliberate attempt would seem to have been made by Silkin to avoid the sort of diction and style which were introduced by the Movement in the 1950s, and of which Tomlinson, to be fair, was a principal enemy. Yet Tomlinson acquired his own dogmas abroad, and they can be seen to be as limiting for a British writer as what others took from the 1950s—an elegance, virtually aesthetic in its implications to the extent that it hindered more social subjects from being properly implicated in the range of work.

Spontaneity is far from being the cure of elegance. Nor do we want poems rough at the edges to make us say, "Well, at least it's not

[3] *The Principle of Water*. By JON SILKIN. Carcanet Press, £2.20, paper £1.25.

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elegant." It's the nature of elegance which deflects poems from passion and strength, even from subjects of weight or importance, into little more than exercises in smoothness, good literary manners, and the feigned urbanity of the man of culture.

SILKIN IS NOT the entire answer to what I feel about Davie and Tomlinson. His long poem "The People", cast as an inert verse-play, is full of firmly worked and severe passages of great power. Steeped in the predicaments of European Jewishness, and obviously the work of long and careful labour, it is of monumental dimensions. Too often, though, cadence and diction coagulate into a heavy fustian, carefully clotted, not sufficiently dramatic to justify its nature as a "verse play", though that I think is a form chosen as an occasion by Silkin, a way of making the writing possible, rather than an opportunity to attempt a peculiarly spoken kind of poem.

His seriousness of purpose is warming. There are no slipshod gestures in the name of "wit." What can be sensed is a sardonic reluctance to engage in what is usually thought of as "wry." He turns away from humour, from an inappropriate lightness of touch, with the defensive grin of one accused, a grin of counter-accusation. It is not an easy book. There is nothing in *The Principle of Water* to flatter a reader's expectations, or invite his approval. A true talent sticks to its truth, demanding a similar earnestness and work from the reader. Nor does Silkin's writing advocate that his poems are primarily stylistic procedures. Davie and Tomlinson—though here perhaps they suffer from their own criticism—appear to claim there is a true style for the Age, that they know what it is, and write it. This was claimed in a recent unsigned manifesto in the *Spectator*, though the poets upheld were J. H. Prynne, John James and others, epigoni of Black Mountain poets and other Americans. Style, however, is not the most important principle in poetry. We fritter away our inheritance of poems, centuries of the stuff, if we claim that it is. You must "say it well"; but, damn it, you must also say something worth attending to, and in an idiom identifiably native, not someone else's.

A POET WHO MANAGES to combine care with a robust, native conception of how poems ought to be is George Kendrick. The movement of his lines is firm. He doesn't slither or waste time in chatty circumlocutions. He takes it for granted that poems happen very often to be social, and not, even secondarily, aesthetic decorations. Living as he does in the same town as myself, I can appreciate the extent to which his place is fundamental to what he writes. Hull is a remote place, peculiarly condensed in atmosphere. It does encourage a poet to consider where he lives, and draw his poems from that. I like a feeling for place in poems. In recent years, this has been urged on British poets as part of an imported Black Mountain programme (see Part V of Ed Dorn's *North Atlantic Turbine*). I don't see any need to import what we have always had. "The River Men", "Flying Back", "Radar", are good examples of it in Kendrick's book, *Bicycle Tyre in a Tall Tree*.[4]

He can be ruthlessly sardonic. In "The Professionals", he ends with a rasping curse—

> *Never cross the chosen.*
> *Birds feed out of their mad*
> *hands. A thousand miles down*
> *a breakfast wind*
> *their blessing can kill the crops*
> *in five counties.*

But despite his attack, the poem is too close to light verse, its occasion easily identified. There is sometimes a straining after authority in Kendrick's poems. His skill in handling narrative as a support to language, cadence and meaning, leads him to be too emphatic on his last lines, creating poems too isolated in themselves. He may be over-conscious of effects.

What I find missing in his book is a sustained sense of theme. A more open approach to writing might encourage his imagination to greater play outside the limitations of a terse, tightened structuring of poems for incisive, dramatic effect. Although his sense of place is strong, as I've said, a more thematic, thoughtful approach to it could provide him with poems more ambitious in scale.

> *Memory, or vision, wrinkles the blind water.*
> *Between fantasy and fact, this side of winter,*
> *The first, inevitable birds light out,*

shows the level of concentration he can achieve. He has some admirably dense and mysterious lines, drawn from imagination, but with the real shadowed closely enough behind them for meaning to be caught, as, for instance, in "Phobia", a poem set in the Canal Zone in the era of National Service. The poem ends with,

> *Nineteen, you lie awake at night. Mosquitoes*
> *embroider the net, voices like shooting stars.*
> *The calendar crawls through your nights of service.*

[4] *Bicycle Tyre in a Tall Tree*. By GEORGE KENDRICK. Carcanet Press, £2.00, paper £1.25.

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MEMOIR

Remembering Auden

By Cyril Connolly

Personal song and language
Thanks to which it's possible for the breathing
Still to break bread with the dead. . . .

A FEW YEARS AGO it would have been easier: memories would have come crowding in, it remained only to sift them and bring them up to date with our last meeting, for I still saw him regularly when he came to England. But since he had made his home in Oxford we hardly met, except through Stephen Spender. Age still finds me devoted to my old friends but increasingly reminded that it is a one-way traffic so that I anticipate their rebuffs from an instinct of self-protection. I used to imagine the old as yarning away together or locked in pregnant silence like Tennyson and Carlyle. But age is not like that: the old are diminishing universes racing further and further apart, piling up space between them, unable to cope with the simplest mechanics of meeting. Artists can be touchy, frivolous and unforgiving, and often the only way to catch a glimpse of our old friends is at a memorial service or a literary award. "O yonge fresshe folke" be warned; friendship is for those who strenuously pursue the same goal; cultivate it now and do not put it off "for when there will be more time" —time there may be but also death, weariness, and estrangement.

I endangered our relationship at a recent meeting by telling Wystan that I could not agree to destroy his letters, that I did not think it scandalous that Keats' love-letters should have been published or the sonnets of Shakespeare, nor rejoice in the burning of Byron's journal. I could not wholly deplore the public's curiosity about artists' lives (better than none at all). But Wystan saw himself by now as a great gentleman. "I am afraid I have become very square in my old age," he answered.

The class whose vices
he pilloried was his own,
now extinct, except
for lone survivors like him
who remember its virtues.

I have disobeyed his wishes by keeping his letters; worse still, I shall want to quote from them.

I HAVE TO HEW MY WAY BACK through the wilderness of time to rediscover the dazzling adornment of my youth, the one indisputable genius—"water-fluent tea-drinking"—whose friendship I could once enjoy on an equal footing. I should perhaps mention in passing that when I am moved by the work of a contemporary my instinct is to wish to get to know him, and that once we have become acquainted, he can do no wrong. Some, like George Orwell and Evelyn Waugh, were already my friends before they revealed their talent; others like Dylan Thomas proved too alien to assimilate, or, like Hemingway, were always somewhere else.

At that time (the early 1930s), poetry seemed to have exhausted itself; Eliot had gone religious, the Georgians moribund; Edith Sitwell appeared to be resting after giving us her *Collected Poems* of 1930 and Geoffrey Grigson had not quite started *New Verse*. *New Signatures*, *New Writing* —everything *new*, but the *New Statesman*, was still in the womb.

I first heard of Wystan through Tom Driberg's column in the *Daily Express* when he required of his large public "Awareness of Auden", referring, I think, to the *Poems* of 1930; but it was *The Orators* (1932) which deeply moved me, while I found the chilly Marxism of *The Dance of Death* rather intimidating. But it was not Auden but Spender whom I was to meet after he wrote me a long letter from the island of Mlini about *The Destructive Element* which I reviewed in the *New Statesman*. We became firm friends and still

BEFORE HIS DEATH *on 26 November 1974, Cyril Connolly wrote this memoir for a forthcoming collection, "W. H. Auden: A Tribute", edited by Stephen Spender, to be published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson. Auden died in Vienna on 29 September 1973.*

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are. Isherwood also I was to get to know well and it was he who told me to look up Auden at his hotel in Valencia where I was to return in my reporting on the Spanish Civil War. I went there with my wife and Ran Antrim, who at that time described himself as "me good pink peer", and we were rather cosseted except for a strict examination by the Comintern agent for whom I produced a letter from Harry Pollitt, the Secretary of the Communist Party. Auden, who was working for the government radio, seemed overjoyed to meet us and ordered a bottle of Spanish champagne, a detail which delighted Isherwood, who said it would have convinced him that it was the real Auden and not some imposter.

I was at once obsessed with his appearance which penetrated deep into my subconscious so that I often dreamt about him. (The last time was January 1973.) Fortunately there are many photographs of the youthful Auden, as he remained till the end of the last War; the solid cragginess came later. He was tall and slim, with a mole on his upper lip, rather untidy tow-coloured hair in a loop over his forehead, with extraordinary greenish eyes suggesting that iceberg glare he liked to claim from his Norse ancestors. His voice was unforgettable, with no trace then of an American accent; he was charming but ruthless, and certainly, like Isherwood, a Marxist of sorts, but less close to Communist orthodoxy than Day Lewis or Spender. My feelings towards him were entirely platonic: I was passionately fond of his poetry and desired his friendship but my subconscious demanded more and I was put out by a dream (based on his ballad) in which, stripped to the waist beside a basin ("O plunge your hands in water") he indicated to me two small firm breasts: "Well, Cyril, how do you like my lemons?" Though not homosexual, I was, I hope, without any prejudices: and so was my wife Jean who became one of Wystan's closest women friends, the first, I believe, to call him Uncle Wiz and whom he described in her copy of his *Epithalamium* as the only woman who could keep him up all night.

After Valencia (May 1937), we soon met again in Barcelona where he took a photograph of Antrim playing chess and where, after a good lunch with much Perelada Tinto, we went for a walk in the gardens of Monjuich. By the remains of the old International Exhibition Auden retired to pee behind a bush and was immediately seized by two militia men—or were they military police? They were very indignant at this abuse of public property and it took several wavings of Harry Pollitt's letter to set him free. I think the incident was important for it revealed the misunderstanding between the revolutionary poet who felt disinhibited by the workers' victory and the new bureaucracy to whom the people's gardens deserved more respect than ever before. I suppose we were in as much danger then as we had been during the shelling of Valencia. By the time we left a few days later it was clear to all of us that the government could not win. I see, by the way, that I reviewed *The Dog Beneath the Skin* for the *New Statesman* on 12 February 1936, and "Spain" on 5 June 1937 whose ending:

> *History to the defeated*
> *may say "alas" but cannot help or pardon*

he has crossed out in my copy and written "This is a lie." The first contemporary inscription I possess is in *Look Stranger* with an unpublished quatrain sometime in 1937. I did not much like *The Dog Beneath the Skin* perhaps because I had found the hero, Francis Turville Petre, a little too much.

> *I raise myself upon an awkward elbow*
> *and mourn beside the open window*
> *those two who fell at Pressan Ambo*

The Ascent of F6 seemed to me a far better play.

One of the drawbacks of being a professional critic is that one sometimes cannot get out of reviewing a friend's books although one is disappointed. I once apologised to Wystan for one of these infrequent disparagements, "O that's all right", he answered, "I didn't mind. I thought 'It's just Cyril'." "And is that what you would have said if I had praised it?"

I HAVE SAID THAT he was ruthless, and I do not mean only that he was intellectually tough. He was uncompromising in his feelings, in his coherence of idea with action. He was hard-edge and unmellowed, wanting the benevolence of his later years. I remember once discussing my father and my difficult relationship with him. Wystan was adamant. "Those people just batten on one, real emotional harpies, they've got to be taught a lesson. Stand up to him, make him see you don't need him any more." ("*From the immense bat-shadow of home deliver us.*") Shortly afterwards my father lunched with me in Soho, a treat he always enjoyed, and on the way back I stopped the taxi outside my door in Chelsea (he lived in South Kensington). He clearly expected to be invited in for a talk and a brandy but I bade him an abrupt farewell and gave the driver his address. Clutching his two thick cherrywood sticks with the rubber ferrules, his legs crossed, his feet in pumps, for owing to arthritis he could not stoop to do up laces, he fingered his grey moustache while a tear trickled down his cheek. I don't know which of us felt more unhappy.

Freud's way-out colleague Dr Groddeck was to blame here, for Auden took him more seriously

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than Marx. He was more at home among biologists and doctors than humanists. He knew German but little French, and he was insularly devoted to northern England.

HOW MUCH MORE DIFFICULT IT IS to write about a poet than his work. I keep trying to describe Wystan yet I feel I am but making a grotesque waxwork because I cannot communicate the mysterious certainty of inspiration that covered old envelopes with his tiny crabbed writing. He never seemed to erase and never to be at a loss—"nothing superfluous and nothing wanting."

To experience the impact of his early poetry one should re-read it in the magazines in which it first came out. *Oxford Poetry*, *New Country*, *New Signatures*, *New Writing* ("*Lay your sleeping head my love*"), above all, *New Verse*. Grigson's little sixpenny, so well-printed and composed, was a joy right up to its special Auden number, but editorial enthusiasm was counteracted by the spleen of his *alter ego*, who saw himself as a *chef d'école* like Breton. But he admired and loved Auden who got no worse chastisement than a comment that "there was a smell of light verse in the air" (1938).

I always felt that the influence of Shakespeare's sonnets (later to be dismissed by the old Anglican arbiter as the height of bad taste) was extremely stimulating to the younger poet seeking to revive a convention in which it was possible to celebrate homosexual love. Hence those five sonnets, which he never reprinted, among the loveliest he has written I have always thought (*New Verse* No. 5, October 1933):

[*Sleep on beside me though I wake for you . . .*]

II

I see it often since you've been away:
The island, the veranda and the fruit;
The tiny steamer breaking from the bay;
The literary mornings with its hoot;
Our ugly comic servant and then you,
Lovely and willing every afternoon.
But find myself with my routine to do,
And knowing that I shall forget you soon.
There is a wound and who shall stanch it up?
Deepening daily, discharging all the time
Power from love. . . .

Those magical first lines of his!

The latest ferrule now has tapped the curb. . . .

or

August for the people and their favourite islands

or

Out on the lawn I lie in bed
Vega conspicuous overhead

or

A shilling life will give you all the facts

IN A BRIEF LIST of my friends in 1937 (I am a compulsive list-maker) I end with "?Wiz"—and one of my pleasantest moments was when I lent him my tails to go to the Palace to receive his gold medal from the King and he came straight back to tell us about it. I shared with Brian Howard the position of his social adviser but Brian, more assiduous, soon cut me out. The next year witnessed his departure with Isherwood for China and in October the publication of my *Enemies of Promise* so eulogistic of his prose and verse.

4 February: "The Indian Ocean is crashingly dull. We take the best part of a week to cross it. You're to get that book finished before we return or there'll be big trouble . . . ."

Hong Kong: "We are living in a baking hut, but move to the Vice-Chancellor's house today. The ambassador saw us while he was dressing, and tomorrow we call on the bishop. Love Wystan." "It's Uncle Wiz's birthday. This evening we're giving a big Chinese supper-party. We're off to Canton next week. Love C."

15 November 1938 [Birmingham]: "I have just finished reading *Enemies of Promise*. . . . As both Eliot and Edmund Wilson are Americans . . . I think *E. of P.* is the best English book of criticism since the war, and more than Eliot or Wilson you really write about writing in the only way which is interesting to anyone except academics, as a real occupation like banking or fucking with all its attendant egotism, boredom, excitement and terror. I do congratulate you on a brilliant but also solid and moving book."

On their way home from China they had passed through America and had both made friends whom they found they had missed more than they had expected. Abruptly they struck camp and migrated to the U.S.A. sufficiently near the outbreak of war to incur some hostile criticism. Soon afterwards the intellectual ties reasserted themselves and Auden began to send his American-based poetry to *Horizon* and *New Writing*. (I published his elegy on Freud in March, 1940.) It soon became clear from his important transitional poem, *New Year Letter* (first published in the U.S.A. as *The Double Man*), that Auden had undergone a change of heart as well as of scene. *On this Island* (*Look Stranger*) is British, *Another Time* transitional, *New Year Letter* American, prelude to *The Age of Anxiety* and the Christian poetry of *For the Time Being*.

We had met again, briefly, in 1945 when he passed through London in his pale American officer's uniform and his flat "a"s ("gas" rhymed with "mask").

28 November 1946, New York: Wystan charming, though very battered-looking. More American than ever and much less self-conscious than in London. . . . On to chez Chester. At last the luxury of

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poverty, stairs (no lift), leaking armchair and an exquisite dinner—with really good European conversation; arguments about poetry and Lorca. Mysticism and fucking, according to Wystan, are the two extremes where man forgets himself and art consequently can't be made. Much conversation about the USA and Wystan continues to propound his point of view (see his Introduction to Henry James' *American Scene*), he is quite pro-British and defends this also. He always reverts to the same argument which I think is true for him—in the USA he receives anonymity, more money (he made ten thousand dollars this year and bought a mortgage) and his desire is gratified for a large, open, impersonal new country.

Away from the "bat-shadow", Auden warns us of the perils of the big city, hold-ups, the proper use of the subway system, and jumping to it at the traffic lights; his welcome is like that of the town mouse to the country one.

Dearest Cyril,
Chester and I sail from here on 7 April [1948]. I hope very much you will be in London then to look after us. It would be lovely if you could meet us at Victoria (you can be the town mouse this time). By the way have you ever read *Tender is the Night*? I did for the first time this summer and found it magnificent—probably the best American novel since H.J. It made me bawl like a baby.

This return visit was after the appearance of the American number of *Horizon* which contained "The Fall of Rome" which he dedicated to me. I believe or rather I hope that it is true that I had asked him to write me something that would make me cry. It is a beautiful poem and like all the true expressions of his genius there is something totally unpredictable about it (those reindeer) yet even so one finds, as once his scientist was Groddeck, that now Sheldon had taken over —"Cerebrotonic Cato . . . ." I also published "In Praise of Limestone."

I THINK THIS IS THE MOMENT to stop, just before Auden's private face grew, through no choice of his own, irrevocably public, finally to settle into that striated Roman mask of luminous authority which it became harder and harder to penetrate. In 1972 I was invited by Alasdair Clayre to the All Souls *Encaenia* where, resplendent in cap and gown, Wystan was made a Doctor of Letters.

"Why Cyril, what on earth are you doing here?" "I came to find *you*," I answered. It was the only time I had ever seen him at a loss.

Night in Jerusalem

I

I turn solitude
into words on paper to be consumed
by a random spark. Night in Jerusalem
a sea-bed struck by the moon. My poem
comes from another planet

II
You said fire,
and I have seen:
a stone strike a stone
and eyes of a pregnant cat.
That night the moon was waxing.
The sea retreated.
My yearning ripened like berries of blood

III
To know as truly as a waterlily
that it is night. To feel out the darkness
like a bat. The sweetness
like an ant. To leave tracks of love
in the sand like a crab.
To withdraw conch-like into a shell
and await the storm.

David Rokeah
translated from the Hebrew by Joel Neuberg

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LETTERS

Breaking the Social Contract

YOUR COLUMNIST *R* writes: "The Social Contract has indeed a long history. . . . As an invention of Rousseau's . . . it rests upon the notion of a General Will . . . ." (ENCOUNTER, December, p.45).

Certainly it is most obnoxious, as *R* would be the first to agree, that this fine old notion, so often and so worthily the resort of the victims of overweening power, should now be abused to refer to a putative private deal between just such a power—the Trades Unions—and their political creatures—the Labour Party. Furthermore it is, to borrow a favourite word from the Leader of that party, obscene to describe something to which only two groups and not the whole citizen-body are parties as a Social Contract.

But *R* grossly underestimates the length of the history of this idea, which certainly stretches back as far as the Athens of the fifth century B.C. Nor is Rousseau its most representative classical spokesman. His *Social Contract* would more aptly have been entitled *The General Will;* since it is the latter which is the new and distinctive idea. This is, in Rousseau, not the basis but the supposed outcome of the notional Social Contract.

A more suitable classical spokesman would be John Locke in the previous century. In Chapter VIII of Locke's *Second Treatise of Civil Government* we find a very literalistic reading of this idea "Of the Beginning of Political Societies." During the Glorious Revolution, for which Locke himself had worked in the thin days, the idea of a Social Contract was no prerogative of cloistered political theorists. For in the operative resolutions of the House of Commons in January 1689 we read:

"That King James II, having endeavoured to subvert the constitution of his kingdom by breaking the original contract between king and people; and, by the advice of Jesuits and other wicked persons, having violated the fundamental laws; and having withdrawn himself out of the kingdom, has abdicated the Government; and that the throne is thereby vacant. . . ."

ANTONY FLEW

University of Reading

Anarcho-Terrorists

IN FRIEDHELM KEMNA'S Letter from Berlin on the death of Ulrich Schmücker ("Death of a Nightingale", ENCOUNTER, September) there were several references to anarchists, with the stock mention of Bakunin, but there was no evidence that Schmücker and his associates and/or assassins have actually had anything to do with anarchism. Going by previous knowledge of activists and their allies, the whole milieu doesn't sound anarchist at all—certainly the *Red Army Fraction* and probably the *2 June Movement* are more neo-Marxist than anything else. A serious analytical account of the political complection of the urban guerrilla tendency in the Western left would be more valuable than the anecdotal accounts which have so far appeared in ENCOUNTER.

NICOLAS WALTER

Harrow,
Middlesex

What Mr Walter calls "anecdotal accounts" happen to be factually true narratives of real incidents among the various revolutionary groups of our day. It is surely of minor importance whether any of them, and to what extent, may agree with theoretical principles of classical anarchism as defined by Mr Walter. History—what is actually happening, and how and why—matters more than theory, especially since the decisive aspect of the new anarcho-terrorist movements is their irrational weakness for emotionalised non-ideas. Nevertheless, we probably will return to the themes once brilliantly set by Joseph Conrad in *The Secret Agent* and *Under Western Eyes.* and only recently documented in our pages by Natalie Herzen's Diary [*Ed. Note.*]

The New Larkin

BOTH FOR THE READERS of ENCOUNTER and of Montale's poetry in general would Mr Clive James (ENCOUNTER, December) care to explain in what way *Diario del '71 e del '72* is "nothing like the collection of poems its predecessors were"? Or does he mean to say that this collection is not like its predecessors as the predecessors (*Ossi di seppia, Le occasioni, La bufera e altro* and *Satura*) were not like each other?

G. SINGH

Belfast

IS IT A TWIST OF FATE or simply an extra gene, which dictates that I should be rewarded for writing an article on Philip Larkin by becoming entangled in an interminable correspondence with a Professor of Italian bearing an Oriental name and resident in Belfast?

By saying that the *Diario* is "nothing like the collection of poems its predecessors were" I meant, of course, that it is not as good.

On a separate but related topic, please allow me to forestall Professor Singh's vigilance by pleading that the spelling *La bufora* for *La bufera* in my recent article on Gianfranco Contini in the *Times Literary Supplement* was the printer's error and not mine. I am telling you this because Professor Singh is pretty well bound to write to you as well as to the *TLS.* I have also warned the editors of *Penthouse, Music Business Weekly* and *Motor Sport.*

Yours desperately,

CLIVE JAMES.

Cambridge

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Rousseau & China

READING Professor Robert Nisbet's admirable presentation of Rousseau's thoughts, (ENCOUNTER, September) I was gripped with a mounting expectation of a reference to Mao Tse-tung or to China, only to be disappointed. Why does a contributor to ENCOUNTER content himself with a mention of Frantz Fanon (who was discussed in the previous issue)? Those who have had personal experience of China are anxious to know if Mao Tse-tung has been influenced with Rousseau's writings. Professor Nisbet might be in a position to ask the poet-Chairman this question and should lose no time in doing it. His answer may in either case stimulate thoughts on how feudalism both in 18th-century Europe and in 20th-century China has influenced political philosophy. As a regular reader of ENCOUNTER for the last twenty years, I am surprised at the total lack of coverage of mainland China. Perhaps the editors of ENCOUNTER are not yet aware of the significance of a quarter of the world's population.

E. STRICKER

Basel

["Total lack of coverage" is a bit severe. Among our articles on "mainland China", there were, in addition to smaller contributions like Alberto Moravia's account of a conversation on Peking, "A Chinese Writer" (ENCOUNTER, January 1968) at least two pieces of direct reportage and analysis: Richard Crossman's "China Diary" (ENCOUNTER, March 1959) and Barbara Wootton's "Journey to China" (June 1973). We intend to publish more; meanwhile we will encourage Professor Nisbet to look further into the thoughts of Chairman Mao.—*Ed. Note*]

Mishan's Inflation

MR ALAN REYNOLDS [Letters, January] is right, I have inadvertently discovered the twenty-second economic fallacy. And it is, as he says, one of "composition"; more specifically of Mr Reynolds' composition.

The Reynolds' fallacy can be stated as follows: "Wherever a trade union succeeds in its pay claim and, in consequence, raises the price of its product, there will be less money left to buy other goods, the prices of which will then fall. Ergo the price-level cannot rise, or not very much."

But, of course, we observe that prices are rising at an unprecedented rate. And I am indeed arguing that in the last year or two, the supply of money has been increasing in Britain in large part owing to the extent of the wage concessions.

E. J. MISHAN

London School of Economics

Who Needs Exams?

IN HIS ARTICLE in support of examinations C. B. Cox quotes an extract of an interview between a university teacher and an "indoctrinated" student:

CANDIDATE: The school forces middle-class values on the working classes.

INTERVIEWER (with intended irony): You mean Shakespeare and Beethoven?

CANDIDATE: Yes.

The interviewer's question, with its appalling logic, does not show the examination system in good light. A whole series of similar imaginary interchanges come to mind. For instance:

INDEX TO VOLUME XLIII

THE INDEX to Volume XLIII (July-December 1974) is now available and will be sent, free of charge, on application to ENCOUNTER, 59 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS. Standing orders for future indexes can also be accepted.

Readers who have already applied to be put on the standing orders list need not apply again, as they will receive the new index automatically.

Encounters (no relation)

THE MIDDLE-AGED WOMAN *in the blue ski-pants threw her head back and let out a nerve-jangling scream. It reverberated around the windowless basement while the cross-legged circle watched impassively.*

It might have been experimental theatre—but, in fact, the performance was all part of the activities of a London encounter group dedicated to self-discovery and the release of pent-up city tensions.

For three-and-a-half hours, with the abandon of children at a day nursery, young and old alike took part in a random programme of encounter activities. Striking Chaplinesque poses in stockinged feet, they tried to push one another off balance with open-handed taps.

Every night of the week, thousands of Londoners are doing much the same thing. Encounter groups, the therapeutic craze that began in California in the sixties, are catching on in Britain in a big way. For Britons—required by custom to keep their emotions in check and their upper lips stiff—encounter groups offer a way to let loose.

EVENING STANDARD *(London)*

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CANDIDATE: The mass media force American values on the British.

INTERVIEWER: You mean Emerson and Henry James?

Professor Cox's system of values omits, I believe, the greatest value of all: the respect for human beings as equals. The chief defect of the examination is not that it moulds the child's imagination and intelligence into distorted and rigid forms—that, in itself, is terrible—but that it fosters and cherishes an unrealistic sense of inequality by idealising a certain mode of functioning, whether or not we believe this mode to be a valuable one.

Midhurst, Sussex PETER LOMAS

"The New Illiteracy"

I HAVE READ with interest Dr Bettelheim's article on Primary School Readers and whilst agreeing with its general tenor, I must point out that he is in error in apparently thinking that Falski's *Elementarz* is a post-War publication.

It is in fact a pre-War textbook which has been modified to suit the current political climate. The meritorious aspects on which Dr Bettelheim dwells are those of the original version, the plethora of red flags a recent innovation.

J. B. DEREGOWSKI

University of Aberdeen

AUTHORS

Mark Abrams is Director of the Survey Unit, Social Science Research Council, and author of *Social Surveys and Social Actions* (1951). His most recent contribution to ENCOUNTER was "Changing Values" (October 1974). . . .

George Feaver is Professor of Political Science at the University of British Columbia. Among his books is a biography of Sir Henry Maine, *From Status to Contract* (Longman, 1969). The illustrations to his article are by **Richard Wilson**. . . .

Frank Gibney was formerly an editor of *Time* Magazine and *Newsweek*. He lived in Japan during the U.S. occupation, and has been a permanent resident there since 1966. He is now editor and publisher of the Japanese edition of the Encylopaedia Britannica. He is the author of *Five Gentlemen of Japan*, a study of Japan's national character, and his new book *Japan: The Fragile Superpower*, from which his article in this issue is an extract, will be published by W. W. Norton this spring. . . .

Max Beloff was Gladstone Professor of Government and Public Administration, University of Oxford from 1957–74; he is now Principal of the University College at Buckingham. . . .

Werner Heisenberg was Director of the Max Planck Institute for Physics and Astrophysics from 1946–70; he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1932. He is now President of the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung. His article was presented as a lecture at the Smithsonian Institution-National Academy of Sciences symposium on the 500th anniversary of Copernicus's birth, and will be appearing with other papers given on that occasion in *The Nature of Scientific Discovery*, edited by Professor Owen Gingerich, published by the Smithsonian Institution Press. . . .

THE 1974 Scott-Moncrieff Translation Prize has been awarded to **John** and **Doreen Weightman** for their joint translations of the works of Claude Lévi-Strauss. . . .

Gillian Tindall is a novelist, short story writer, and journalist. A new novel, *The Traveller and his Child*, will be published by Hodder & Stoughton later this year. . . .

Professor Sidney Hook is Senior Research Fellow at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, Stanford University. Alcove Press (London) and Library Press (USA) recently published his book *Education and the Taming of Power*, and Basic Books are bringing out a collection of his philosophical essays, *Pragmatism and the Tragic Sense of Life*. . . .

Philip Larkin is Librarian of the University of Hull. He edited *The Oxford Book of Twentieth Century English Verse* (1973), and published last year a new collection of poems, *High Windows* (Faber & Faber). . . .

Constantine FitzGibbon, who contributed a memoir of Norman Douglas to the September 1974 issue, is the author, among numerous other works, of *Red Hand: The Ulster Colony* (Michael Joseph, 1971), *A Concise History of Germany* (Thames & Hudson, 1972), and, as co-author, *The Life and Times of Eamon De Valera* (Gill & Macmillan, 1973). . . .

Douglas Dunn is Fellow in Creative Writing, University of Hull. His third collection of poems, *Love or Nothing* (Faber, 1974) was a Poetry Book Society Choice.

ENCOUNTER Magazine is published in London by Encounter Ltd. (in association with the Open Court Publishing Co.), 59 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY WATMOUGHS LIMITED, IDLE, BRADFORD; AND LONDON

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East Berlin

FORKED TONGUE: A "common mother tongue" is no longer considered to be the basis for a fatherland, according to official sources of the East-German Republic. In the DDR-magazine, "Volksarmee," a Colonel Hochmuth argues that Muttersprache is far less important than social consciousness, class status, and economic position. In any case there never was a time when all Germans spoke the same language. After all the German language of Thomas Muentzer was not that of Martin Luther; and the speech of Marx, Bebel, Liebknecht and Thaelmann had very little in common with that of German Imperialism.

FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE ZEITUNG

London

LEFT FASCISM (LIBRARY DEPT.): *As in most if not all other professions, "extreme Left-wing" thinkers are active in public libraries. But their views of the functions of public libraries has never before been expressed so openly and plainly as it is in a letter published in the* Library Association Record, *the official journal of British librarians.*

After castigating some of his fellow-librarians for élitism, anti-unionism, lack of commitment and other crimes, the writer comes to the real point:

"One simply has to scan the shelves of a public library," he says, "to gauge the extent to which racism has grown in this country—compare the number of books by fascist/imperialist writers like Enoch Powell and Dennis Wheatley with books such as "Soul on Ice" and "The Autobiography of Malcolm X." Compare also the issue figures.

"Sadly, my profession is aiding and abetting the spread of fascism by the open display of newspapers such as the Daily Express *and provision of Right-wing books . . . surely the time has come for a serious rethink on censorship in theory and practice . . . censorship of a kind needed to prevent this country from becoming a fascist puppet of the USA."*

It is amusing, in a way, that the librarians who hold these views are the very same kind of people who in other contexts are continually telling us that censorship is the worst of all evils and "the ultimate obscenity."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Paris

BOUTIQUE BUCHENWALD: *The Liberation is so interesting these days because the period it erupted from, the Occupation, is madly fashionable in France.*

As in the United States, France is undergoing a wave of nostalgia. The phrase here is "la mode rétro," *and* la mode rétro *consists of an unappetising mix of the last 40 years, with special emphasis on 1940-44. The Occupation and the "purifying" period, or* L'Epuration, *that followed it, the most tragic and troubling years of French history, have been reduced to mere fashion and have thus been removed from any moral context.*

This results in a horror like a recent issue of "Paris-Match" *which printed, as if it had a scoop, some newly uncovered photos of daily life in occupied Paris.* "La Mode Rétro Discovers Occupied Paris in Color" *ran the headline, and the article started as follows:*

"La Mode Rétro *is here. Europe is delving into its past, the 1930s with the Gatsby style, cloche hats and lowered hemlines, the 1940s with the mode of yellow stars for Jews and grey-green tunics and cleated boots for men. . . ."*

No enterprising boutique has started selling yellow stars yet, but there's no reason to think they won't.

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

London

OLD PRAYERS, NEW WORDS: *Old and familiar prayers and canticles in the Book of Common Prayer are modernised in changes suggested by the Liturgical Commission of the Church of England which are published this week.*

Throughout the new version the word "thou" becomes "you" and the phrase "do not bring us to the time of trial" is used in place of the word "temptation" in the Lord's Prayer.

The Nunc Dimittis ("Lord now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in Peace") is rephrased as "Lord now You let Your servant go in peace. Your Word has been fulfilled."

Many will regret the suggested disappearance of the phrase "All sorts and conditions of men," in favour of the very tame "Men of every race and in every kind of need."

Modernisers could not resist offering, in place of the majestic phrase "In knowledge of Whom standeth our eternal life" a very threadbare alternative: "To know You is eternal life."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Lübeck

WIDELY RED: An hotelier in the West German town of Lübeck has arranged to provide in all his bedrooms not only the Bible, but also an abridged, one-volume edition of Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* and a German translation of Chairman Mao Tse-tung's little red book, as part of the West German Hoteliers Association's campaign launched under the motto "More hospitality for our visitors."

As evidence that his new departure is appreciated, the hotelier reports that most of the copies of the quotations from Chairman Mao have been "taken away" since they were placed in his hotel's bedrooms.

THE TIMES

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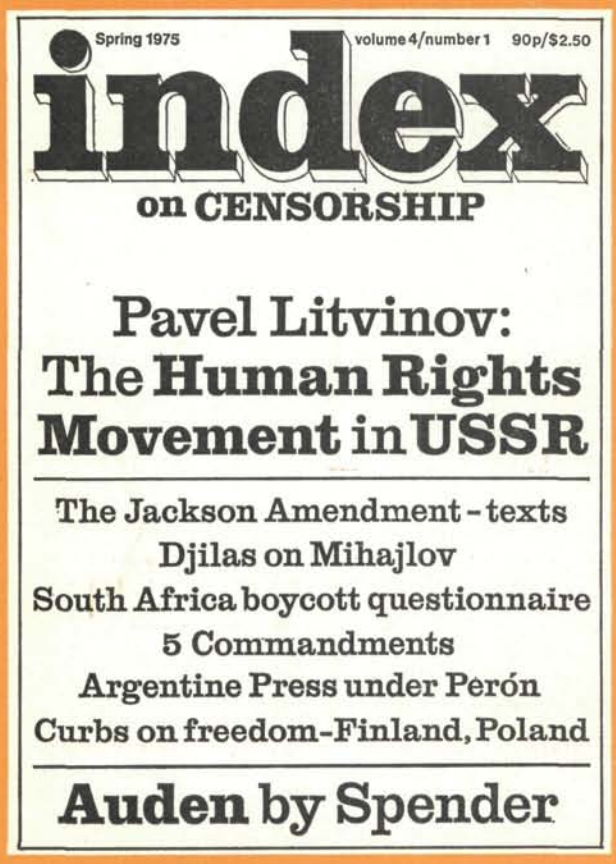
Index is opening to public gaze the censorship of all kinds of writing not only by regimes we customarily assume to be in this business but the respectables as well. There is only one thing worse than censorship, and that is unreported censorship. Unfortunately the intellectual community is almost as ignorant of the facts and as illusioned about the procedures of the censor as the rest of society. The job INDEX is doing is unique and it needs to be read by anyone who wants to know his time. *Arthur Miller*



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21 Russell St London WC2B 5HP
£3.60 pa (US$10); singly £1 inc post (US$2.50)

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Bookstore distribution by Random House Inc.

I do not see how any writer or scholar can afford to miss reading INDEX which chronicles with the widest scope and the greatest exactitude the painful, heroic story of those of us who are not so lucky or so free. *Angus Wilson*

We would like to congratulate Writers & Scholars International on this splendid publication, to which we are happy to be subscribers. It carries the struggle for freedom of expression to a stimulating and, above all, a practical level. *International PEN, Sydney Centre*

In my opinion the most important journal in this field. *Prof Dr Jacob Van Weringh*

I've been a devoted subscriber to INDEX since it began and I think it one of the most valuable periodicals being published in the world today. *Robert Shelton*

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